AT-TAWHID OR MONOTHEISM

AS IN THE IDEOLOGICAL AND THE VALUE SYSTEMS OF ISLAM

By:
Muhammad Taqi Misbah Yazdi

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

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PREFACE

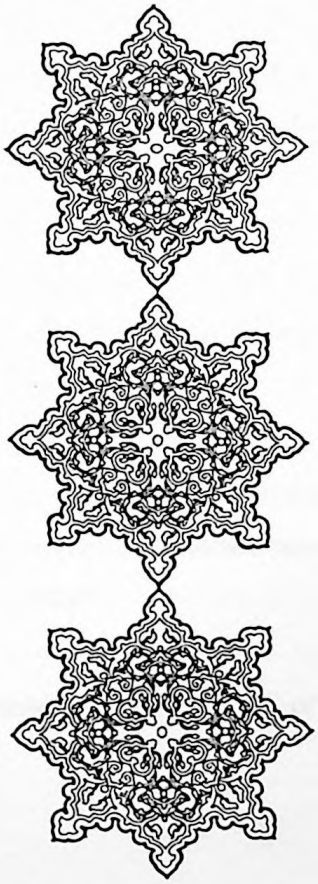
The Establishment and Stability of the Islamic system requires, more than anything else, the firmness of the beliefs and values of Islam in the hearts of the people. The realization of this very significant matter, in its own turn, depends upon the universality of Islamic education at different Levels, by using multifarious means and opportunities. One of the best of such occasions and opportunities is the weekly congregations of **Ṣalātul–Jumu'ah** (Friday Prayer), Particularly in cities where the proceedings of the **ṣalātul–Jumu'ah** are directly broadcast by the radio and television.

Hence, in response to the request of the management committee, in charge of the affairs of the ṣalatul–Jumu'ah in the city of Tehran, I delivered a series of lectures on "The status of **At–Tawḥīd** in the ideological system and value system of Islam". The texts of these lectures were regularly published in the Persian language daily, viz: "**Jamhūrīyyi–Islāmī** (The Islamic Republic)". Now, responding to the requests made by a large number of the listeners and also by some friends, an abridged version of these lectures is being published for the interested readers. It is hoped that this humble service will please Al–Imam Muhammad Al–Mahdi (AS)–may the Almighty Allah hasten his auspicious reappearance.

Muḥammad Taqī Miṣbāḥ Yazdī

PART 1

At-Tawhid in the Value System of Islam



At-Tawḥīd (Monotheism)-the base of divine religions

The matter to be discussed here is the status of At–Tawḥīd in the ideological system and value system of Islam which constitutes the main base of divine religions, in particular, the sacred religion of Islam.

The Holy Qur'ān says:

"و لقد بعثنا فی کلّ امة رسولاً ان اعبدواْاللّه واجتنبواالطّاغوت ..."

" *And Certainly We raised in every People a messenger saying: 'Serve Allah and shun the Shayṭān' ... (16:36).*"

Another āyah (verse of the Holy Qur'ān) says:

"و ما ارسلنا من قبلك من رسول الاّ نوحی الیه انه لا اله الا أناْ فاعبدون"

"*And We did not send before you any messenger but We revealed to him that there is no god but Me, therefore, serve Me (21:25).*"

Also, each and every one of Allah's Prophets (AS), as mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān, from the very outset of their being appointed as prophet by Allah, said to their people:

"...'یا قوم اعبدواْاللّه ما لکم من اله غیره'..."

"...*'O my people! Serve Allah, you have no god other than Him' ... (7:59).*"

Also, the Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam, at the time of his

Al–Bi'thatun–Nabawiyyah (the appointment by Allah as prophet) said:

"قولوا لااله الاّ اللّه تفلحوا"

"Say there is no god but Allah so that you will find salvation."

Prosperity, salvation and felicity both in this world and in the Hereafter depend upon and are to be sought in **At–Tawḥīd**. So, believe in Allah– The One and bear witness to His Oneness so that you will achieve salvation.

The Necessity and Significance of At–Tawḥīd to Al–A'immatul Ma'ṣūmuūn (The Twelve Infallible Imāms (AS)

Besides, it has been narrated from the Infallible Imāms (As), in various forms that the felicity both in this world and the Hereafter are to be found in **At–Tawḥīd**. One of such aḥādīth (traditions) is the following:

"لا اله الاّ اللّه ثمن الجنة"

"The Formula: 'Lā ilāha illallāh' (meaning there is no god but Allah) is the Price of paradise."[1]

Also, there are many other aḥādīth in our books on aḥādīth indicating that if a person is a **muwaḥḥid** (monotheist, believer in One God) and preserves the belief in **At–Tawḥīd** till the end of his life, he will be protected against and immune from Allah's torment.

The Ḥadīth Bearing Silsilatu-dhdhab

Ḥaḍrat 'Alī ibn Mūsā Ar–Riḍā (AS)– The Eighth Infallible Imam– in the Ḥadīth bearing **silsilatu-dhdhab** (golden chain of Infallible narrators), which he narrated among a gathering of twelve thousand men of learning and **'ulamā'** (Islamic scholars) of the city of Nayshāpur and in the social and political conditions prevailing at that time, when he said: "I heard from my father, Mūsā ibn Ja'far (AS) who narrated from his father and forefathers (AS) reaching to **'Amir Ul–Mu'minīn** (The Commander of the Faithful), Al–Imām 'Alī (AS) who narrated from the Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam, who narrated the same from **Jibrā'īl** (The Archangel Gabriel) saying that Allāh says:"

"كلمة لا اله الاّ اللّه حصني، فمن دخل حصني امن من عذابي"

"The words 'Lā ilāha illallāh' (There is no god but Allah) is My Fortress, so anybody who entered My Fortress became immune from My torment."

So, the words **'lā ilāha illallāh'** and bearing witness to **At–Tawḥīd** (to the Oneness of Allah) and belief in Almighty Allah is the firm Fortress of the Almighty Allah and the one who believes in **At–Tawḥīd** and bears witness to the Oneness of Allah has entered this firm Fortress and will be immune from Allah's torment. In a number of **riwāyāt,** it has been said that anybody who utters these words of **At–Tawḥīd** sincerely, will enter the Paradise. According to Imam (AS), the sincere believing in **At–Tawḥīd** is to avoid disobedience to Allah– The One. Anyhow, the riwāyāt concerning **At–Tawḥīd** are many and the 'Ulamā' and great men of religious learnings have written especial books in this connection based on the sayings of the Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam and

the Infallible Imams (AS) which form an invaluable treasure.

Here, a question arises and that is what role does belief in **At–Tawḥīd** and in the Oneness of Allah play in man's individual and social life and that why this subject has so much been emphasized by Allah's Prophets (AS), so much so that they have unanimously put it at the head of their call (to Allah) and that the Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam and the Infallible Imams (AS) have made utmost efforts and borne many sufferings to clarify it and clarify the dimensions it has.

The Statement made by AmirUl–Mu'minīn, Al-Imām 'Alī (AS) on AT–Tawḥīd in the Battle of Al–jamal

During the Battle of Al–Jamal, a bedouin Arab said: "I want to talk to Amir Ul–Mu'minīn (AS)". He was taken to Amir Ul–Mu'minīn (AS). Those who were around Al–Imām, 'Alī (AS), his Companions and the army commanders, were looking forward to see what matters that bedouin Arab had to discuss with Imam (AS) in that critical situation? Had he got some information about the war? Had he got any secret news? What kind of matter it is? While they were all waiting, that bedouin Arab suddenly raised the subject of **Al–Tawḥīd**, Saying:

"أتقول انّ اللّه واحد"

"Do you say that Allah indeed is One."

Imam (AS)'s Companions objected to him, saying: "Is it the proper time for such talks? Don't you see that Amir ul–Mu'minīn (AS) is busy in handling the affairs of the war?" Thus they attempted to take him away from

Imam (AS) and hinder him from continuing his talk. However, Imam (AS) said:

"دَعوهُ فان الذي يريد الاعرابي، هو الذي نريده من القوم."

"Let him speak, what this bedouin is seeking is the very thing we demand from these people whom we are fighting with.[3]"

Imam 'Alī (AS) meant that the war was for **At–Tawḥīd.** Then, in that very battlefield and in those very conditions and circumstances, Al–Imam 'Alī (AS) made certain remarks about **At–Tawḥīd** which have been recorded in the books on riwāyāt, and which are difficult to be understood even by us– the educated ones.

By citing the above example, we mean to point out that the matter of **At–Tawḥīd** has been of such a great significance to the Leadrs of the religion of Islam and all great prophets (AS) that they did not want to miss any opportunity for paying attention to it, even in the Battle of Al–Jamal which was being fought against a number of so–called Muslims and muwaḥḥidūn Hence, this fundamental principle should be imprinted on the minds of the people more and more and in a better way and the Muslims should acquire acquaintance with all its dimensions so that it affects the felicity of people in both this world and the Hereafter. If **At–Tawḥīd** is known, as it should be, and penetrates into hearts, men's life will become totally divine and will be placed in the right direction, on the straight path and towards the Almighty Allah and will remain immune from deviational trends, errors and blunders which are all rooted in deviation from **At–Tawḥīd.**

This introduction will hopefully serve to clarify the significance of this matter from the viewpoint of Islam and all other divine religions; and, no

doubt, this belief can guarantee man's attitude towards the world of creation and also man's conduct towards his perfection. But how?

At–TAWḤĪD – THE ROOT OF ALL BELIEFS

In short, we believe that **At–Tawḥīd** is the root of all haq (true) beliefs and the root of all values and we have no doubt in this regard. However, the question may arise as to how this matter should be expressed so that it may be proved that **At–Tawḥīd** is the basis of all the true beliefs and the basis of all the right values and how anybody who becomes a believer in **At–Tawḥīd** will become an inmate of Paradise and will be blessed with felicity both in this world and in the Hereafter? In the Holy Qur'ān, there is a very interesting and valuable parable which we would quote here to clarify the relationship of **At–Tawḥīd** with the ideological system and the value system of Islam. The Holy Qur'ān says:

"الم تر كيف ضرب اللّه مثلاً كلمةً طيبةً كشجرةٍ طيبةٍ اصْلُها ثابت و فرعها فى السّماء"

"Have you not considered how Allah sets forth a parable of a good word (being) like a good tree, whose root is firm and whose branches are in heaven (14:24)."

Such a tree will invariably bear sweet and delicious fruits of its own. However, the word which has no stable root and which is not based on the firm and solid pillars of the truth and the reality is the parable of a tree whose root has been pulled out of the ground. Such a tree will obviously not only bear no fruit, but will before long decay and be destroyed too, as says the Holy Qur'ān:

"وَ مثل كلمة خبيثة كشجرة خبيثة اجتثت من فوق الارض ما لها من قرار"

"And the parable of an evil word is as an evil tree pulled up from the earth's surface: it has no stability (14:26)."

In this Qur'ānic parable, the Islamic system has been regarded as a tree whose root is "**Al–Kalimatu ṭayyibah**" (The Holy Kalimah) word, ie, "**Lā ilā ha illallāh**" (meaning there is no god but Allah). This word and this belief is a firm root which becomes established in the hearts of the talented men and which generates other roots as well. With the growth of this root and tree, many branches and leaves grow and these will eventually bear blossoms, flowers and delicious and valuable fruit. And the difference between this tree and the other trees is that the other trees bear fruit only in particular seasons of the year, but this tree never ceases to bear fruit and invariably puts its fruit at the disposal of men, which fruit is nothing other than felicity both in this world and in the Hereafter.

"تؤتی اکلها کل حین باذن ربها ..."

"Yielding its fruit in every season by the permission of its Lord ... (14:25)."

Description of the relationship between At–Tawḥīd and the other Beliefs

By deriving inspiration from this holy āyah of the Holy Qur'ān, we can attempt to clarify the matter as to what relation exists between **At–Tawḥīd** and the other beliefs and also between **At–Tawḥīd** and the value system of

Islam. Fortunately, unlike many of the schools of thought (which on the basis of defective thoughts, put together some elements and without having considered any relationship between those principles and elements, say: "This ideology as a whole is comprised by a number of principles", the whole system of the religion of Islam is a coherent, well-knitted and harmonious system of which all the elements are related to each other and among which there is no disharmony.

The Two Ideological and value systems of Islam and their Relationship

As a whole, the content of the religion of Islam can be regarded as a two-part system and two secondary systems which are interrelated and united together, and which constitute the whole Islamic system: One is the system of the beliefs and the other the system of the values. In Islam, there are a series of beliefs in which the people should believe, accept and have faith in and there are a series of values which they should observe in their actions and behaviour. We call the former part 'the ideological system' and the latter 'the value system' of Islam, and by deriving inspiration from the holy verse regarding **ash-shajaratuṭ-ṭayyibah** (good tree, Holy Qur'ān, **Sūrah 14, Āyah 24**), we can interpret the former part as **Uṣūl ud-Din** (The fundamental principles of Islam) and the latter part as **Furu'ud-Dīn** (The duties to be performed according to Islamic Shāri'ath). For men's lives, the beliefs are like the root of a tree which, if are firm in people's hearts, will also affect their actions, provided that they have adequate awareness and insight about those and properly know all the dimensions of beliefs. So, in the first place, the beliefs should be strengthened and made firm; and in the second place, attention should be paid to their practical effects; because though the system

of Islam is comprised by two systems, yet between them there exists a relationship similar to the relationship between aṣl (root or principle) and far' (the branch), the relationship between the root and the branches and leaves. Hence the Islamic scholars have called the true beliefs as **Uṣūl'ud−Dīn** and the value system (as the furū'ud−Dīn). The former (the principles) are the roots of the tree of Islam and the latter (the values) are the branches of the tree of Islam.

On the other hand, there is mutual (relation of) affecting and being affected between the root (on one hand) and the branches and the leaves (on the other). Both the 'root' has a vital role in a tree's growth and in its development of branches and leaves and also the 'branches and the leaves' have a considerable effect on the strength of the root. So, just as in the beginning the roots cause the emergence of the branches and the leaves, the latter, too, in thier turn help the root to gain strength. In other words: the curve of the relation between the root and the branch and their changes is the form of zigzag, in the way that from the root it goes towards the branch and again from the branch it returns to the root and in this way this current between the 'root', namely, the faith or belief and the 'branch', namely, the action will continue, the stronger the faith, the stronger and more effects it will have in action; and in the same way, the more a man observes the laws (the branches) of the religion and acts in accordance with his root belief, the more will the root of his belief be strengthened. This is a mutual affecting and being affected (relation) between the root on one hand and the branches and the leaves on the other, between faith and action, between worldview and ideology. However, it is basically the worldview which evolves the ideology.

If we carefully ponder about the above−mentioned āyāt of the Holy Qur'ān, once again this relation will be clear to us. In the Holy Qur'ān, Allāh

(SWT) says:

"و ما ارسلنا من قبلك من رسولٍ الاّ نوحی الیه انه لا اله الاّ انا ..."

"And We did not send before you any messenger but We revealed to him that there is no god but Me ... (21:25)."

And then Allah expresses the branch attached to the above principle: "فاعبدون (... therefore serve Me.)". That is now that you know that Allah is the One and none other than Him in the world has this position, so you should serve Me (Allah– The One). Serving (or worshipping) concerns the action and knowing that Allah is one, causes man to attempt to serve (worship) Him in action. If that base does not exist, there will exist no room for this branch and if that root is not firm, this branch will not bear fruit.

To avoid getting away from the subject, we should mention that the theme of our discussion is the expression of the status of **At–Tawḥīd** in the ideological system and value system of Islam, that is, in that collection of beliefs and values in which a Muslim should believe and which he should observe in action, what position does **At–Tawḥīd** have and which role does it play?

The Relationship of At–Tawḥīd with Other Principles of the Religion

If we regard **At–Tawḥīd** just as this very simple and common concept which we have learned in religious schools, thouth it is true, yet it does not suffice to clarify this relation. We have learned that the first Aṣl (principle) of the principles of the religion of Islam is that Allah (SWT) is one and is not two; that the second principle is that prophets (AS) have been truthfully appointed by Allah (SWT) to guide the people; that the third principle is

belief in **Ma'ād** (The Resurrection); that the fourth principle is that Allah (SWT) is just and that the fifth principle is that the successor of the Holy prophet (SA) of Islam is the **ma'ṣūm** (infallible) Imām who has been appointed by Allah (SWT). If we measure these concepts as described, we will see no relation among them, for example, between the belief that Allah is One and the belief that men will be revived on the Resurrection Day. This thought of lack of relation which at first occurs to the simple-minded persons, is because **At-Tawḥīd** has not been properly understood (by them). To clarify the relation of these principles with **At-Tawḥīd**, we need to expand these relations to some extent, so that it will become clearly known that how by uttering "**Lā ilā ha illallāh**" (There is no god but Allah), man's felicity both in this world and in the Hereafter will be secured.

The great Islamic scholar and commentator of the Holy Qur'ān- The late 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī (may Allah bless his soul) says: "**At-Tawḥīd**, when expanded, becomes the whole of Islam and Islam, when condensed, **At-Tawḥīd** is acquired. "**At-Tawḥīd** is like a compressed treasure which on the surface appears as a simple ideological principle, but which however, when expanded and spread, embraces the whole of Islam. In other words, the whole of Islam is as a body which is formed by various limbs and parts and of which the soul is **At-Tawḥīd**. If **At-Tawḥīd**, namely, the soul is breathed into this body, it will be an alive body, otherwise it will turn into a lifeless and dead system. The Holy Qur'ān has also a comparison in this connection. It says:

"كلمة طيّبة، كشجرة طيّبة، اصلها ثابت و فرعها فى السماء"

"... A good word (being) like a good tree, whose root is firm and whose branches are in heaven (14:24)."

At–Tawḥīd is as the root and base of the religion.

The Relationship of AT–Tawḥīd With 'Adl

With the above introduction, we compare the relationship of each of the beliefs (the principles of the religion) with **At–Tawḥīd**: We know that the Almighty Allah is unique in all perfections, but this uniqueness (oneness) does not mean the uniqueness (or oneness) which may be attributed to His creatures, **ie**, every being in this world is one, or as the philosophers say: unity is integrated with the being (wherever there is a true unity, there is a true being, and wherever there is a true being, there is unity). This is the same misconception the wrongness of which **Amirul–Mu'minīn, Al–Imam'Alī** (AS) expressed to that bedouin Arab in the Battle of Al–Jamal. By saying that man or any other being is one, it is meant that for him (or for the existence of it) two, three or thousands of other beings can also be imagined. But Allah (SWT) has such Oneness (or uniqueness) that it is impossible to imagine a second or a number two for Him and in this same concept His uniqueness or oneness in all His perfections is conceived. That is, no one's power is like Allah's, wherever there is a power, it is from Him. That is to say, other than Allah (SWT), no one has any power or any knowledge of his own, wherever there is knowledge, it is from Allah (SWT); wherever there is life, it is from Allah (SWT); wherever there is perfection and beauty, it is from Allah (SWT). If we understand the fact that the Almighty Allah possesses each and every perfection of being infinitely, we will know that no imperfection can be imagined for Him. And naturally such a One, Who is the very perfection and from Whom every perfection emanates and stems, does not perform any action which does not cause any perfection and which does not lead to the emergence of a perfection and also His aim of the creation of His creatures is

nothing other than their perfection and eternal salvation. And, He is also devoid of oppression which is a behaviour away from perfection and will treat each and every individual on the basis of 'adl (justice) and fairness. So we see that the second principle of the principles of the religion, namely, 'adl has direct relation with At–Tawḥīd and knowing the Oneness of Allah (SWT).

The Relationship of At–Tawḥīd with Nubuwwah

Nubuwwah (Prophethood), too, has such a relationship. If you invite a guest to your house and insistently ask him to be your guest today, but do not give him the address of your house, you have quite obviously not done a wise act. Can it really be said that you desire to have the person as your guest while you have not shown him the way. If a person seriously means to be a host, he will certainly give the would–be–guest the address of his house and will even warn the guest of the mistakes which may possibly occur due to the resemblance of the alleys and this is a wise act. Allah (SWT), too, has created men so that they will attain eternal felicity. Therefore, as His wisdom demands, Allah (SWT) should appoint prophets (AS) to guide His creatures, show them the way, keep them away from mistakes and errors and hence it is again knowing Allah which Leads us to (the knowledge of) Nubuwwah (Prophethood).

In the wake of the proof of sending the prophets (AS), Divine Wisdom demands that after the demise of Allah's (Last) prophet (SA), prophet Muhammad (SA) – The Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam, People will not be left without a leader and guide and will know whom to refer to when encountering with problems. Thus the matter of Imamamh (Succession of prophet Muhammad (SA) by the Twelve Infallible Imāms (AS)) is realized.

The Relationship of At–Tawḥīd with Ma'ād

After the way (to Allah) has been clarified, the people either traverse the way exactly as the prophets (AS) and their successors (AS) have illustrated and follow the same path which they have directed, or they deviate from that way. It will be away from justice and wise conduct if these two groups, (namely, those who have traversed that straight way, have overlooked their desires and lusts and have sacrificed their lives in the way of the exaltation of the word of **At–Tawḥīd** on one hand, and those who have fought against them (against the followers of Allāh's way) on the other) are looked upon with the same eye. So, divine wisdom and justice demands that after this world in which the kāfir (The infidel or the disbeliever) and the mu'min (the faithful or the believer), the lewd and the virtuous equally enjoy material blessings, there be another world (ie, **Ma'ād** – the Resurrection) the blessings of which will be exclusively endowed to the faithful and Allah's friends and the torment of which will be exclusively given to the infidels and the enemies of Allah (SWT).

So, knowing the Almighty Allah and the attributes particular to Him creates these other beliefs, like the main root of the tree which when planted inside the earth, other roots will be brought into existence from it, which however, collectively form on system. When these roots become firm and the tree starts its vital activity, it begins to develop branches and leaves, namely, these beliefs affect man's action and give direction to his behaviour, and just as in the ideological system of Islam, **At–Tawḥīd** is the fundamental pivot and the mother root, so also in the value system of Islam, **At–Tawḥīd** (monotheism, worshipping the One God – Allah) and serving Allah (SWT) is the essence of all values, and basically any value set forth in Islam traces back to worshipping Allah (SWT).

At–Tawḥīd – The Pivot of the Value System (of Islam)

Unlike other value systems, the value system of Islam is not constituted by dispersed and inharmonious elements, rather, it is an overall value which is manifested in various forms and which are regarded as miscellaneous manifestations of worshipping Allah (SWT). The root of these values in Islam is devoting one's heart to Allah (SWT) and whole–heartedly loving Him, and it is with the existence of this love that all values emerge and man no longer gets attached to this world. The one who falls in love with Allah (SWT) and firmly plants His love in his heart will no longer love the luxuries of this world and the worldly possessions will not be of any value to him.

If a man whose heart is to be Allah's place (as there is a Riwāyah which say: "قلب المؤمن عرش الرحمان" "A Mu'min's (a faithful person's) heart is the Al–'Arsh (Throne of Allah) of Allah the Compassionate") attaches his heart to worldly possessions such as cattle, land and stones, he has certainly not known Allah (SWT), for, if a person knows Allah (SWT), he will know that no one other than Him is worthy of being worshipped, then he will acquire no love for this world; and when there is no love for this world, there will no longer emerge any jealousy, envy, stinginess, enmity and rancour, there will no longer emerge so many evils and mischiefs which are the result of love for worldly position, there will no longer emerge oppressions and injustice stemming from domination–seeking and the root of all such conflicts, which are due to the worldy matters, will dry up. To the one who has no love for worldly possessions, the existence and non–existence of such possessions are the same. Such a person wants worldly possessions to be a means for his perfection, or to spend them in the way of Allah (SWT) so that it will be rewarded with lasting reward (in the Hereafter) for him (by Allah (SWT)).

The one, who comes to know Allah (SWT) and in whose heart Allāh's love

becomes established, will want for Allah (SWT) each and every thing he may want. If Allah (SWT) commands him to hold such and such a position so that by holding that position he could serve the people, he will accept Allah's command whole-heartedly, but if it is just a passion, he will never attempt to hold such a position, because it would become an idol and **At-Tawḥīd** is not consistent with worshipping idols.

There is a **Ḥadīth** (Tradition) with various documents in our books on **Riwāyāt**, including the book **Al-Kāfī** as follows:

"ما ذئبان ضاريان في غنم قد فارقها رعاؤها، احدهما في اولها و الاخر في آخرها بافسد فيها من حبّ المال و الشرف في دين المسلم."

"The ruin which two wolves, one from the front and the other from behind, cause to a herd left alone by its herder is not greater than the ruin caused to a Muslim's faith by love for wealth and love for position.[4]"

Imagine a herd of sheep left alone by its shepherd and this guardless herd has been caught by two wolves having attacked the herd. from two sides. How much of these sheep do you think will remain unharmed? Obviously, no sheep will be left unharmed and a great harm will be suffered by the herd. In the above ḥadīth, the Holy prophet (SA) of Islam says that the harm caused by two hungry wolves for a herd of sheep, is not more than the harm caused by love for wealth and position to a Muslim's faith. Because love for wealth and love for position become idols for persons and drive them out of **At-Tawḥīd.**

So, just as **At-Tawḥīd** constitutes the root of all facts and the axis of ideological system and or in today's words, the pivot of the worldview of

Islam, so it also is the pivot of the value system and the ideology of Islam.

Can At–Tawḥīd be Found by Education?

Discussion about the issue of **At–Tawḥīd** has various dimensions, part of which is specialized and technical in nature and has to be surveyed in scientific centres, just as the reality of **At–Tawḥīd** and knowledge of Allah (SWT) is a light which has to be shone by the Almighty Allah in fit and pure hearts and that reality will not be acquired through discussion and dialogue.

In the du'ā (invocation to Allah) of 'Arafah by Sayyid'ush–Shuhadā' (The Lord of the Martyrs) Al–Imam Al–Ḥusayn (AS), we read:

> "انت الذي اشرقت الانوار في قلوب اوليائك، حتّىٰ عرفوك و وحدوك، و انت الذي ازلت الاغيار عن قلوب احبائك حتّىٰ لم يحبوا سواك و لم يلجوا الىٰ غيرك."
>
> *"O Allah! You are the One Who shone the lights in the hearts of Your righteous servants so that they knew You and Your Oneness and You are the One Who wiped out the aliens from the hearts of Your righteous servants so that they loved none but You and took refuge in none but You.*[5]"

However, in spite of all this, it is not so that the discussion and education about issues of **At–Tawḥīd** be closed and there be no way other than shining lights in the hearts, as the exalted prophets (AS) too, taught realities concerning **At–Tawḥīd** alongside emphasizing action, **Ikhlās** (sincerity of intention) in the acts of worship, and would miss no opportunity, even in the battle–field and during **Jihād** (holy war) for the expansion of this great knowledge.

As already mentioned, **At–Tawḥīd** on one hand constitutes the pivot of the ideological system and the more it becomes perfect, the greater will become the belief in other realities and beliefs which are in fact manifestations of faith and belief in **At–Tawḥīd** and on the other hand, it **(At–Tawḥīd)** is the structure of the value system of Islam, namely, each true perfection and virtue is acquired in the light of **At–Tawḥīd** and stems from the root of **At–Tawḥīd**. In other words, when **At–Tawḥīd** is manifested in action, it bears the fruit of morality and virtue and its effects in the eternal world will be (attaining) different degrees of the paradise. So, difference in the degrees of the Paradise and true perfections are in fact subject to the difference of the stage and degree of **At–Tawḥīd** of men.

At–Tawḥīd in Creation

One of the most simple and most easy to understand degrees of **At–Tawḥīd** is **At–Tawḥīd** in creation, namely, that one believes that the world of being has been created by One Creator. This belief existed even among the polytheists. The Holy Qur'ān quotes from the polytheists of Makkah and the idolaters who were during the life–time of the Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam as having said that concerning their idols they did not believe in creation, rather, they regarded the idols as a means for drawing near to the One God and said:

"... ما نعبدهم الاّ ليقربونا الى اللّه زلفى ...."

"... *We do not serve them except that they may make us nearer to Allāh, ... (39:3).*"

The idolaters imagined that the Almighty Allah, has daughters named the

angels (God forbid) and with this imagination, they made imaginary physical portraits for them and worshipped them so that the souls and lords of those idols would be pleased and as a result they would intercede with the One God (for the idolaters).

In another āyah the Holy Qur'ān says:

"ولئن سألتهم من خلق السموات والارض ليقولن اللّه ..."

"And if you ask them who created the heavens and the earth, they will certainly say: 'Allah' ... (31:25)."

So, the Polytheists of Makkah did not deny Allah, rather they believed in gods lower than the level of the One God and worshipped them by making their idols. They believed that gods hold the power and authority over the world and that the affairs of the world are managed according to their view, ie, it is they who are effective in the revolution of the moon and the sun, in the emergence of the earthly and heavenly phenomena and in men's felicity and adversity, that some were in charge of the management of the seas, some others had undertaken the responsibility for the land, that some had supervision over the affairs of the wars and some managed the affairs of the men. Theses polytheists considered the world to have numerous directors and believed in Lords of the species. And this is the matter against which the Holy Qur'ān has contested most severely. And, the Holy Qur'ān clarifies to the people that the same One Who is the Creator of the world is also the (One) Lord and the Manager of the world and that none can cause any effect or change in His creatures without His permission.

With this explanation, it becomes clear that in Islam mere belief in the Oneness of the Creator is not sufficient and that Islam does not consider

those who have such beliefs to be monotheists and worshippers of Allah – The One and Only, rather, **At–Tawḥīd** in Lordship (belief in One Lord) should also be added to belief in One Creator.

At–Tawḥīd in Rubūbbīyyah (Lordship)

If we comprehend Allah's Lordship and properly understand its reality, we will see that its concept is very extensive and has many manifestations. As a whole, Lordship is divided into two parts: One lordship is **takwīnī** (Pertaining to creation) and the other lordship is **tashrī'ī** (pertaining to divines laws and religion). **At–Tawḥīd** pertaining to lordship in creation is to believe that management and running of the world in the realities of creation are in the hand of the Almighty Allah and to believe that the revolution of the moon and the sun, the emergence of the day and the night, men's life and death and the protection of the creatures and the world from destructive strikes and clashes is with Allah and it is He Who preserves the heavens and the earth.

"ان اللّه يمسك السمٰوات والارض ان تزولا ... "

"Surely Allah upholds the heavens and the earth lest they come to naught ... (35:41)."

Just in the same way, the coming into being of every creature in any part of this spacious world, its growth, its death, its reproduction and or its emerging any sign(s) of being, are all under the management and will–power of the Almighty Allah and there is no phenomenon outside the sphere of the Lordship of the Almighty Allah. Breathing, speaking, listening, the movement of the wind, the growth of the plants, the movement of even a little leaf on

the branches of a tree, the movement of an ant, and even the movement of a gnat are not outside divine lordship and no being in any part of the world can make the least movement without His permission in creation. Therefore, there will no longer be any room for independently bringing about changes or affecting by angels and other creatures of Allah and any change or effect brought about by the creatures, it is under Allah's permission in creation and due to the power Allah has given them and they have no independence of their own in the fulfilment of an action and in applying that power. That is to say, it is not that even if Allah does not will, a creature is able to fulfil an action, bring about a phenomenon and/or create a change in the world. Allah's will–power in creation is dominant over the whole world and everything lies under His will–power. Of course, this does not mean compulsion and is neither inconsistent with men's freewill the description on which has been given in its own place.

Rububiyyah Pertaining to Divine Laws

Another part of lordship concerns men's freedom of will and choice. Among the creatures, Allah (SWT) has created in this natural world, there are a group of which the movements, effects and evolutions are subject to the actions which they fulfil out of their own freewill and they are human beings. To reach his true perfection, man must move with his own freewill and choice, for, if a movement emerges in man out of compulsion, it will not be a human movement. For instance, if a man is lifted with a crane from one place and taken to another place, it would be a mechanical movement, not a human movement. Also the growth of the body which is common to the plants, animals and men is a vegetal movement and the movement will in reality be human which stems from the origin of man's freewill and choice, even though

the will–power is bestowed upon man by Allah and It is Allah Who provides the conditions for work, It is also Allah Who creates the matter and It is also Allah Who gives man the ability to act and the fact is that in each and every moment man needs Allah's creation and bestowal, but inspite of all this, the action which emerges from man is from the origin of his own freewill and choice and such an act is human. Now let us see how is Allah's management regarding these acts which man fulfils out of his own freewill.

Allah's **Rububiyyah** demands that besides putting the origins of willpower, choice, the means and the tools of work at men's disposal, He also introduces to him the proper knowledge of the true and straight way, lets him know the good and the bad and issues and stipulates commands and laws for his individual and social life and this is the meaning of Lordship in divine legislation. So, **At–Tawḥīd** in lordship in creation demands that man believes that the management of the affairs of the world and of men in creational matters which are beyond his own willpower are attributed to the Almighty Allah, just as **At–Tawḥīd** in regard to **Rubūbiyyah** pertaining to divine laws demands that man gets the direction for life only from Allah, regards the right of law–giving to be only Allah's and considers no other being to have any independent right in giving laws. That is to say, to him the law should be valid which has been legislated by Allah's permission and which is based on the legislative permission of the Almighty Allah, the very permission which Allah has given to the Holy Prophet (SA) and the Infallible Imams (AS) and this permission has been communicated through the naṣṣ (divine decree, explicit stipulation) of the Infallible Imam (AS), in a general way, to the qualified Fuqahā' (Islamic jurisprudents), the very thing which in our society today is recognized as one of the pivots of ideology, namely, **Wilāyat ul–Faqīh** (the guardianship of the Islamic jurisprudents). So, the laws are valid to the

monotheists (believers in **At–Tawḥīd** because they are eventually supported by and based upon the divine leigislative permission given by Allah and if such base and support do not exist, no law will be valid to the monotheists and rather it will be considered a kind of **shirk** (polytheism).

Qur'ānic Āyāt in Regard to Rubūbīyyah Pertaining to Creation

Lordship in creation has many parables and innumerable **āyāt** of the Holy **Qur'ān** denote its validity. For instance, wherever we encounter the word **Rabb** (the Lord) in the Holy Qur'ān, it points out this fact:

"يا ايها النّاس اعبدوا ربكم الذى خلقكم والذين من قبلكم لعلكم تتقون."

"O men! worship your Lord Who created you and those before you, so that you may practise **taqwā** *(2:21)."*

You should worship the One Who is the Lord of you, of those who were before you and of all creatures.

"ذلكم اللّه ربّكم خالق كلّ شىء، لا اله الاّ هو فانّى تؤفكون"

"That is Allah, your Lord, the Creator of every thing; there is no God but He; whence are you then turned away (40:62)"

Your Lord is only Allah, so which way are you being taken and to which direction are you being deviated? Your direction shoud be towards Allah Who is your Lord. The sentence "الحمد للّه رب العالمين" *"Al–ḥamdu lillāhi Rabbil 'ālamīn'* (All praise is due to Allāh – The Lord of the worlds) (Sūrah 1 of the Holy Qur'ān) which each Muslim is duty–bound to repeat at least

ten times each day (in wājib ṣalawāt) is an emphasis on this matter that everyday we repeatedly take notice of the fact that the Lordship of the world of being, the possession of power, authority and control over the world, the management and running of the world are wholly and perfectly in the hands of the Almighty Allah.

The Position of Lordship in Divine Legislation and the Required Level of At-Tawḥīd

As for lordship in divine legislation, we know that from the Islamic perspective and in accordance with the teachings which the Holy Qur'ān presents, the origin of deviation in belief and action is Iblīs which is the same being who had been created before Ḥaḍrat Ādam (AS) and had been engaged in worshipping Allah for many years. Amir'ul-Mu'minīn (The commander of the faithful) Al-Imam 'Alī (AS) says in "Nahjul-Balāghah":

"و قد عبدالله ستة آلاف سنة لايدرى امن سني الدنيا ام من سني الآخرة"

"Iblīs worshipped Allah for six thousand years, while we do not know whether it was of the years of this world or of the years of Hereafter[6]"

Iblīs worshipped Allah for six thousand years and yet it is not known whether these years have been of the years of this world each year of which is 365 days or of the years of the other world each day of which is one thousand years. Anyhow, for a very long period of time which is not quite imaginable for us, Iblis had existed and had been worshipping Allah (SWT), so that the angels had thought that Iblīs was of the angels and had given it a place in

their own ranks. But Iblīs had a two–sided nature (namely, like man it had freewill) and had to be tested so that the level of its **At–Tawḥīd** and knowledge of Allah (SWT) would emerge and it would become clear whether he had the necessary level for **AT–Tawḥīd** or not. The test of Iblīs was realized through Hadrat Ādam (AS), in the way that after the creation of Hadrat Ādam (AS) Iblīs was commanded (By Allah) to perform sajdah (prostration) to Ādam (AS). But Iblīs disobeyed this divine command and because of this disobedience, it was driven away from the nearness to Allah and became the head of the inmates of hell and the rest of the inmates of hell will go to hell for following Iblīs.

But why the one who has worshipped Allah (SWT) in His oneness is driven away from His nearness for one opposition and one sin and reaches such a level of wretchedness which is unthinkable for us? What is the secret behind the fact that so much worship is ignored and Iblīs falls so low because of just one sin?

The analysis which on the basis of Islamic outlook can be made of this matter is that the sin of Iblīs stemmed from defect in its **AT–Tawḥīd,** manifested itself in the form of a practical disobedience (to Allah) and caused its fall. Because in reality Iblīs did not believe that whatever Allah (SWT) commands, His creatures should accept His command unquestionably. Iblīs said:

"... انا خیر منه، خلقتنی من نار و خلقته من طین"

"... I am better than he: You have created me of fire, while him you did create of dust (7:12)."

What is this command You are giving me, how shall I prostrate To Ādam while I am better than him? These words in fact arose from Iblīs's spirit of

disbelief and unfaithfulness and were demonstrative of his inner and hidden **Kufr**. The Holy Qur'ān also says:

"... وكان من الكافرين"

"... And he was one of the disbelievers (2:34)."

Such a disbelief existed in Iblīs before, but it had not yet emerged and turned into the stage of action. Iblīs did not have belief up to the required level of **At–Tawḥīd** and did not believe that the right to command, order and inhibit unquestionably belongs exclusively to Allah (SWT) and whatever He commands has to be fulfilled; otherwise, Iblīs believed in the One God and worshipped no other Lord besides the One Lord and he also talked to Allah.

"خلقتنى من نار و خلقته من طين"

"... You have created me of fire, while him you did create of dust (7:12)"

Iblīs even believed in Allah's Lordship in Creation and in the Resurrection Day."

"... انظرنى الى يوم يبعثون"

"... Respite me until the day when they are raised up (7:14)."

So, Iblīs had neither any defect in the principle of belief in Allāh's being the Creator, nor in belief in Allāh's Lordship in creation and nor in belief in the Ma'ād. But still he falls so much! why? Because he does not believe in Allāh's Lordship in Law–giving (divine legislation) and does not regard Allah's command to be obeyed unquestionably, unless Allah's command

would be consistent with (Iblis's) own thought and desire.

There are many other evidences proving that the Almighty Allah regards those ones as **mushrik** (Polytheist) who consider the right of independent law–giving for themselves or for the others, including the Jews and the Christians who thought their 'ulamā' (religious scholars) and monks to be their Lords and who are reproached by Allah:

"اتخذوا احبارهم و رهبانهم اربابا من دون اللّه ..."

"They have taken their doctors of law and their monks for Lords besides Allah (9:31)."

In riwāyāt, in the interpretation of this āyah of the Holy Qur'ān it has been said that they unquestionably obeyed the chiefs of the churches and the synagogues. That is, just as they considered it necessary to obey the commands of Allah's Book, so also they regarded it incumbent to obey the command of the council of the church and the command of the council of the synagogue, such as also today such things exist among various Christian groups that sometimes the council of the church decides and makes a law named religious law, and the Christians are obliged to regard it as divine and Christian law. This is in reality the **shirk** in legislation (law–giving) and in lordship in legislation. A monotheist should consider the right of law–giving to be independently for the Almighty Allah and should consider valid only the law which is given in the light of Allah's legislative permission.

So, the required level of **At–Tawḥīd** in Islam, namely, the first level at which man is considered **muwaḥḥid** (monotheist) from Islamic viewpoint is that man believes in the Oneness of the Creator, the Oneness of the Lord in (relation to) creation and the Oneness of the Lord in (relation to)

law–giving. That is, man should believe that the Creator, the Lord, The Master, the Holder of power and control over the world and also the Genuine law–giver is the One.

AT–Tawḥīd in 'Ubūdīyyah (servitude) to Allah

After belief in the above matters, there comes the turn of **At–Tawḥīd** in **Ma'abūd** (The Worshipped One). That is, besides all these, a **Muwaḥḥid** (monotheist) person should believe that no one but Allah (SWT) Who is the Absolute Lord and the Absolute Law–Giver is worthy of being worshipped. Belief in this matter, (**At–Tawḥīd** in Divinity and in Being Worshipped) is among the **'uṣūl** (Principles) of the religion of Islam but its external practice is rated among the **furū'** of the laws of the religion of Islam. Therefore, for a **muwaḥḥid**, it is necessary to know the Creator, the Lord and the Planner of the World, the Chief Law–Giver and also the Only One Who is worthy of being worshipped to be Allah and all these have been summed up in the pure word:

"لا اله الا الله"

"*Lā ilāha illallāh (There is no God but Allah)*".

This word, besides denoting **AT–Tawḥīd** in (Allah's) being Creator, also guarantees the other stages of **At–Tawḥīd** and without these the least of **At–Tawḥīd** in Islamic viewpoint is not achieved. This stage aside, there are the perfectional stages of **At–Tawḥīd** which stages man should gradually reach from the viewpoint of knowing Allah and put into Practice from the viewpoint of action.

The important point which should be pointed out here is that if a person

really believes in At–Tawḥīd in Allah's Lordship, namely, if he regards the management of the affairs of the world to be exclusively in the hands of the Almighty Allah, he will certainly observe certain effects in his life, the first stage of which being his refusal to bow down in humiliation to any being (other than Allah), because when man believes that the power and control of the whole being is in the hands of Allah, there is no longer any reason for him to pay homage to any body. A man bows down and pays homage to the others when he considers them to be effective in an action and or runner of an action. But when one knows that the management of the whole world is in the hands of the One God, he no longer pays homage to any body (but Allah). The Muslims of early period of Islam, by realizing this very fact that the term At–Tawḥīd includes such meaning, were built–up and in a short time this knowledge about Allah and His virtues were manifested out of them and they achieved such great positions. All have heard that when the armies of Islam reached Iran, the Iranians sent a commander of an army to speak to the armies of Islam to ask them what they wanted to say and what they wanted from them, money, position, land? or, did they want something else? The troops of Islam, the very persons who had been trained in the light of Islam for several years and had benefited from the Holy Qur'ān, had reached such a high level of attitude, broad–mindedness, and magnanimity of spirit and endeavour, replied: "We have not come to take any money from you or to occupy any land, rather we have come to liberate Allah's creatures from the yoke of slavery to you. Our aim is that human beings all over the world be liberated from slavery and servitude to persons like themselves who are also the creatures of Allah[7]". Man should acquire such greatness and should not make himself humble or low before any one other than Allah.

Manifestations of At–Tawḥīd in 'Ubūdiyyah to Allah

The slogan of **"Allahu Akbar"** (Allah is the Great) which today prevails in the Islamic Republic of Iran and for which slogan, namely, the slogan of **"Allahu Akbar"**, the world knows us, conveys this very meaning that greatness and magnanimity is exclusive to Allah and that man should only humble himself to Allah and to none else unless Allah commands to respect the others, as He has commanded us to respect your parents:

"واخفض لهما جناح الذل من الرحمة ..."

"And make yourself submissively gentle to them with compassion ... (17:24)."

Such an expression of submissiveness is **'ibādah** (servitude) to Allah and humbling before His infinite greatness and muwaḥḥid does so only at the command of the Almighty Allah. And the same is also true of humbling before the Holy prophet (SA) and the Infallible Imams (AS).

"يا ايّها الّذين امنوا لاتقدّموا بين يدى اللّه و رسوله"

"O you who believe! be not forward in the presence of Allah and His Messenger ... (49:1)."

Otherwise the person of the Holy Prophet (SA) and Imams (As), apart from their relation to the Almighty Allah and the respect in which Allah has held them, from the viewpoint of a **muwaḥḥid**, should not in themselves be sanctified and before them one should not humble himself. This respect too in which the people hold the successors of the Imam (AS) and today for the esteemed leader of the Islamic Revolution is in fact servitude to Allah. This

respect is not out of family relations with him, nor is it because of greed for wealth or fear of punishment. This is a sentiment which stems from **At–Tawḥīd**, and since our people have acquired the love for Allah, they hold in greater respect any body who is nearer to Allah and who endeavours more for the establishment of His rule and before such a person, they consider their lives of little values.

That some Sunnī brothers accuse the Shī'ahs and the other Muslims of **Shirk**, it is out of the misunderstanding which has arisen from this very matter. They imagine that **At–Tawḥīd** in Allah's Lordship and in His being the Worshipped (One demand that man holds no other one in respect, because if one does so and/or for example kisses the grave of the Prophet (SA) or the Imams (AS), he will be a **mushrik**. Such accusations are due to unawareness of the fact that this respect is in fact the respect for Allah and for divine positions. Were it not for Allah's command and were it not for the relation which Allah's **awliyā'** (friends) have towards Allah – The exalted, this could be considered a stage of **shirk**, but now that it is done in obedience to Allah's command and due to the relation of Allah's **awliyā'** to Him, it is not only not the **shirk**, but is also the very **At–Tawḥīd**. It is Allah Who commands us to respect His Prophets (AS) and **awliyā'** and it is also Allah Who says: If any body wants his sin to be forgiven (by Allah), he should go to the door of the house of the Holy prophet (SA) of Islam.

"... ولو انّهم اذ ظلموا انفسهم جاءوك فاستغفروا اللّه و استغفر لهم الرسول لوجدوا اللّه توابا رحيما"

"... And had they, when they wronged themselves, come to you and asked forgiveness of Allah and the Messenger had (also) asked forgiveness for them, they would have found

Allah Relenting, Merciful (4:64)."

Allah says that for the forgiveness of your sins you should refer to the Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam, he asks (Allah for) forgiveness for you and you yourselves ask (Allah for) forgiveness, then Allah will forgive your sins, At that time too, the **Munāfiqūn** (the hypocrites) said: "We will ask forgiveness before Allah Himself, then why should we also go to the Prophet?" They refused to go to the Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam, to express their want to him, to appeal to him and to request him to act as intercessor with Allah for them. This refusal brought about their **nifāq** (hypocrisy) and deprived them of Allah's favour and of the Holy Prophet (SA)'s asking Allah for forgiveness for them and it was because of this very disregard and hypocrisy that Allah said (to the Holy Prophet *(SA)*): "Even if you ask forgiveness for them seventy times, they will not be forgiven (by Allah);" "Why? Because they rendered arrogance and disobedience towards Allah's command and did not observe the respect which they should have paid towards the Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam. Since they disbelieved in Allah's blessing, they are no longer deserving of Allah's forgiveness, even if the Holy Prophet (SA) himself asks forgiveness for them.

"استغفر لهم اولا تستغفر لهم ان تستغفر لهم سبعين مرة فلن يغفر الله لهم."

"Ask forgiveness for them or do not ask forgiveness for them; even if you ask forgiveness for them seventy times, Allah will not forgive them ... (9:80)."

So, those who out of arrogance, refuse to pay respect to the Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam and to Allah's **awliyā'** and feel scorned to humble before Allah's

awliyā', will not deserve Allah's mercy. They are not only not **muwāḥḥidūn,** but have rather the worst kind of **shirk**, namely, the very kind of **shirk** which Iblīs had, whereas, had they any **shirk** in Allah's being the Creator, this would not cause so much degradation for them. If those who have recognized the One God and who know that all things in the world are in His hands disobey His command and are arrogant before Him, they are then worse than those who have not known Him and hence Iblīs is worse than the Idolaters, though he had recognized Allah and had also worshipped Him. So, the one who has recognized Allah, has understood His greatness and still disobeys Him, is more deserving of fall and torment than the one who has not yet acquired any recognition of Allah and has not known Him. Therefore, it should not be wrongly imagined that belief in **At−Tawḥīd** in Allah's Lordship has any inconsistency with the belief of the Shī'ahs and of the majority of the Muslims about the Prophets (AS) and the Holy Imams (AS).

We do not regard any one to be independently effective in the creation and management of the world besides Allah and alongside Him. However, we believe that the Almighty Allah has granted certain powers to some of His creatures and that He has willed that many of the works be fulfilled through the channel of their will−power. Allah fulfils miracles at the hands of His Prophets (AS) and even that he revives the dead at the hands of 'Īsā (Jesus Christ) (AS), it is by no means inconsistent with **AT−Tawḥīd** in revival. The true Reviver is Allah and it is He Who grants such a power to 'Īsā (AS), the son of Maryam (AS) and also grants any power to any body He wills, as He has willed to grant such power to our Holy Imams (AS) and this belief has not only no inconsistency with **At−Tawḥīd**, but is also of the stages of **At−Tawḥīd**. Just as Allah tested Iblīs through commanding him t obey Ādam (AS) and humble before him, so He will also test other creatures of His

through commanding them to obey His Prophets (AS) and **awliyā'**.

"و ما ارسلنا من رسولٍ الاّ ليطاع باذن الله ..."

"And We did not send any messenger but that he should be obeyed by Allah's permission ... (4:64)."

Thus, as Allah has commanded, it is incumbent upon all the people to obey the prophets (AS) and the one who refuses to obey the Prophet (AS) has refused to obey Allah.

According to **riwāyāt**, Iblīs said to Allāh: "I will worship you as much as you want, exempt me from prostrating to Ādam." But Allah addressed him; **ḥadīth**: "انی اريد ان اطاع من حيث اريد" "If you want to worship Me, worship Me the way I want you to." Otherwise, you have obeyed your own desire and worshipped your own passions. If you are a worshipper of Allah, you should step in the way which Allah has ordained, not the way which your own imperfect mind thinks, as some groups had invented some ways for worshipping Allah. This kind of worship in fact traces back to worshipping oneself, not to worshipping Allah. Therefore, to believe that Allah's **awliyā'** are endowed with certain levels of creational guardianship and bring about certain changes in this world by Allah's permission is the same as **At–Tawḥīd** and to appeal to them and to ask them for intercession (with Allah) has no sort of inconsistency with **At–Tawḥīd**.

The Reality of At–Tawḥīd

In this part of the discussion, it is very appropriate to take note of certain points. The first point is that: **At–Tawḥīd** is not just to profess by tongue and to bear witness to the Oneness (of Allah) and the prophethood (of prophet

Muhammad (SA)) (although the utterance of **shahādatayn** (the two witnesses by a Muslim that Allah (SWT) is One and Prophet Muhammad (SA) is His Messenger) cause a number of external decrees in this world to embrace the one (who utters the **shahādatayn**). However, that **At−Tawḥīd** which is the source of man's eternal felicity and his true perfection does not revolve around the axis of word and tongue), rather it (**At−Tawḥīd**) is a reality in the heart and is a faith which develops in the heart. To express **At−Tawḥīd** and to utter **shahādatayn** is a factor for which the person (who expresses **At−Tawḥīd** and utters **shahādatayn**) receives Islamic treatment, his body is regarded as tāhir (Islamically pure), he may marry a Muslim and his life and property is safe, and slaughtering of animals by him for meat is ḥalāl (Islamically lawful). But it is by no means indicative of the perfection of the soul and eternal felicity (of the person), because there may be some who apparently claim Islam, whose life and property are protected and the (meat of) animal slaughtered by them is considered ḥalāl, but who have, however, no trace of spirituality and eternal salvation, and who in the Hereafter, are even placed in the lowest parts of the hell, such as **munāfiqūn** who apparently claim Islam, but have no faith in their hearts, about whom the Holy Qur'ān says:

"انّ المنافقين فى الدرك الاسفل من النار"

"*The hypocrites are indeed in the lowest stage of the fire ... (4:145).*"

And for this very reason in the here after, the condition of the hypocrites is worse than that of those who openly expressed **kufr** and **shirk**.

So, what becomes the source of eternal felicity is the faith in the heart which should develop in the heart out of insight and awareness and a

muwaḥḥid should devote his heart to Allah (SWT).

Expression of At–Tawḥīd with tongue and not out of Conviction

During the early period of Islam, there were some people who out of unawareness and following the social wave expressed about embracing Islam, in the way that when the distinguished classes of the society and the famous persons in the community became Muslim, then following them, this unaware class, too, embraced Islam. The Holy Qur'ān, while accepting their external Islam and not rejecting them, warns them not to think that they have real faith, and tells them rather what they have acquired is an external Islam and that they should try so that īmān (faith in Islam) enters into their hearts.

"قالت الاعراب امنا قل لم تؤمنوا و لكن قولوا اسلمنا ..."

"The dwellers of the desert say: 'We believe'. Say: 'You do not believe but say, We submit' ... (49:14)."

The desert–dwelling Arabs said that we believe and are like other believers. The Almighty Allah says to the Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam to tell them that they have not yet believed and faith has not yet entered into their hearts, that however they were Muslims and if they wanted to become true believers and to use the spiritual and eternal effects of faith, they should try so that faith would enter into their hearts and that they would attain trust and certainty (in faith) and devote their hearts to Allah out of insight and awareness and that it is then that they would be among true believers.

Anyhow, one of the critical and dangerous currents of the early period of Islam was this very issue of **nifāq**, that a number of persons apparently expressed Islam, but did not believe in Allah and in the Holy Prophet (SA) in

their hearts. Of course, **shirk**, and **kufr** have stages, just as Islam and īmān have stages. Some of these **munāfiqūn** were the most obstinate enemies of Islam and of Prophet Muhammad (SA), but some others were not as obstinate although they did not like the Islamic system either. In description of some of these **munāfiqūn** the Holy Qur'ān says:

"... و اذا قاموا الى الصلوٰة قاموا كسالى، يراءون الناس، و لايذكرون الله الا قليلاً"

"... *And when they stand up for the* **ṣalāt**, *they stand up sluggishly, to be seen by the people, and they do not remember Allah but a little ... (4:142).*"

Such **munāfiqūn** take part in the **ṣalawāt**, go to the mosque, attend the congregational prayers, but with listlessness, languidness, without enthusiasm and just for showing themselves to the others and making them believe that they are also among those who recite **ṣalawāt;** and by attending religious gatherings their purpose is also the same, as the Holy Qur'ān says:

"... يراءون الناس و لا يذكرون الله الا قليلاً"

"... *They do it only to be seen by people and do not remember Allah gbut a little (4:142).*"

And in their hearts they have but little remembrance of Allah and this is one of the styles of the Holy Qur'ān that if some individuals have even a little attention to and remembrance (of Allah), Allah makes an exception of them.

By the above statements we meant to point out the fact that external Islam may be accompanied by inner disbelief; there may be persons who are

apparently Muslims and who even perform the acts of the Muslims, but who have no faith in their hearts, for īmān is a different matter. That it is said that body of the person who has uttered **shahādatayn** is **tāhir** and his blood is immune, should not prompt one to imagine that eternal felicity is also attained by him. The former is one matter and the latter is another matter. The former concerns **fiqh** (Islamic jurisprudence) and the latter concerns beliefs and commandments.

Obligation to At–Tawḥīd

Another point which should be taken note of is that some feeble–minded persons who more or less exist in all societies, when coming across the **mutashābih** (metaphorical, intricate) **āyāt** and **riwāyāt**, mean them according to their own advantage and do not pursue the **muhkam** (clear) **āyāt** and riwāyāt which interpret the **mutashābih āyāt**. For instance, there is a **riwāyah** which states: "If anybody utters the word **'La ilāha illallāh'** (There is no God but Allah), he will enter Paradise". There is also the well–known **silsilatudh–dhahab** (The golden chain) **riwāyah** from Al–Imam 'Alī ibn Mūsā Ar–Riḍā (AS) (the eighth Imam of the Shī'ahs) which states: "كلمه لا اله الا الله حصنى" "The words **la ilāha illallāh** are my fortress." The weak–minded individuals think that just saying "**La ilāha illallāh**" suffices to make one enter Paradise, whereas mere verbal utterance and the movement of the tongue do not work and can only be the source of external decrees. In the terminology of **āyāt** and **riwāyāt,** by uttering a word, verbal utterance is not meant, rather belief in heart is meant which has been interpreted in other **riwāyāt** and reference should be made to them, so that by paying attention to those interpreting and **muhkam riwāyāt** the meaning of such **mutashābihāt** and intricate **āyāt** and **riwāyāt** be realized. Or in the Holy Qur'ān we read:

"انّ اللّه لايغفر ان يشرك به و يغفر ما دون ذلك لمن يشاء ..."

"Surely Allah does not forgive that any thing should be associated with Him, and forgives what is besides that to whomsoever He wills ... (4:48)."

Some Persons infer from such kind of **āyāt** that the rest of the sins are not important and it is enough for a person just to avoid saying God is two to enter Paradise and Allah forgives the rest of the sins, as the Holy Qur'ān says:

"و يغفر ما دون ذلك لمن يشاء"

"and forgives what is besides that to whomsoever He wills. (4:48)"

Such superficially derived inferences which stem from ignorance and the spirit of slackness, should not become the source of our deception and we should not let ourselves be deceived by satan by this means. The matter is not so simple.

The Meaning of the Term At–Tawḥīd and the Initiation of Distortion in It

To clarify the matter, we should better give the meaning of the term **At–Tawḥīd** and take advantage of **āyāt** and **riwāyāt** for the interpretation of this significant Islamic Principle which is the root of all beliefs and values.

The term **At–Tawḥīd** means to regard as one and only. However, in the common usage of Islam and according to religious jurists it means to regard Allah as one and only and does not mean to regard everything as one and only. Some leftist deviated groups try to mean **At–Tawḥīd** in such a way as to

be consistent with their own vested interests. They say that **At–Tawḥīd** means to make one and since it is not possible to make Allah one, because Allah is Himself One, so **At–Tawḥīd** has nothing to do with the Oneness of Allah and by **At–Tawḥīd** it is meant that the society should be made one; class differences should be removed so that a new society with oneness be created. These are the so–called Islamic Marxist groups who had been impressed by the Marxist school of thought and wanted to give Islamic colour to their own Marxist ideology.

We know that Marxism in the philosophy of history and historical materialism propounds that human society is moving towards a classless society, in the way that the differences existing in the society will intensify and reach to an extent where class differences will totally be removed and all people will be the same as far as enjoying the offerings of the material life is concerned. In other words, the people will reach a new balanced society. These leftist groups, too, moulded the same expression with "**Tawḥīdī**" (based on Tawḥīd– related to **Tawḥīd**) suffix and said: "a new balaned Tawḥīdī society" and by **Tawḥīd** they meant the very unity of class or removal of classes, and for proving it they reasoned that basically **Tawḥīd** means "to make one" and this has nothing to do with God.

These mixed and in fact atheistic thoughts left ill–effects upon our unaware youth so much so that it became one of the greatest dangers for Islam and the Muslisms.

As for the term "**Tawḥīd**", which is from the infinitive "taf'īl" in Arabic literature, sometimes it is employed to mean "making one" and sometimes to mean "considering one" and we know that the infinitive "**Taf'īl**" is not always employed for making transitive of its famous meaning. There are many words which we even employ in our Persian expressions, which words though are of

the infinitive "**taf'īl**", yet do not have that meaning. For example, the words "**ta'ẓīm**", "**takfīr**", "**tamjīd**", "**tasbīḥ**", "**taqdīs**", "**takrīm**" and the like which are all of the infinitive "**taf'īl**", yet none of which mean to bring about the quality. You have heard that it is said that for such and such a person "**takfīr**" is made. By saying this word, is **kufr** infidelity, disbelief created in him? Or, is he regarded as "**kāfir**" (infidel, disbeliever), or, when for a witness is declared "**tafsīq**" in a law–court, and it is said that "this witness is **fāsiq** (an evil–doer) and thus his appearing as a witness is not acceptable," is **fisq** (evil–doing) created in him? or, is he considered as a **fāsiq** (an evil–doer)? When it is said that for such and such a person was offered ta'ẓīm, is it meant that 'aẓamah (greatness– the adjective of the infinitive **ta'ẓīm**) has been created in him (by those who offer to him **ta'ẓīm**)? All of you pay **ta'ẓīm** (respect) to Imām. Do you (by so doing) create **'aẓamah** (greatness) in him or do you perceive his **'aẓamah** (greatness)? All of us utter **takbīr** for Allah (to pronounce Allah's glory through the call "**Allāhu Akbar**" (Allah is the greatest). Do we (by so soing) create greatness in Allah (SWT) or consider Him as great and recall His greatness?

These are all from the infinitive **taf'īl**. **At–Tawḥīd** too means to regard Allah (SWT) as One, not to make Him or any other thing one. Even if we have a classless society in Islam and it is also desirable, it does not concern as **At–Tawḥīd** as a principle of faith of Islam, and it is interesting to note that in the Holy Qur'ān, the word **At–Tawḥīd** and its derivatives are not found at all and this great Islamic principle has appeared in the Holy Qur'ān in other wordings. The Holy Qur'ān says:

"و الهكم اله واحد، لا اله الاّ هو ..."

"And your God is one God! there is no god but He ... (2:163)."

Your God is One and Only God and He has no partner, either inside or outside His Being.

The discussion is about knowing Allah, not the society, so the creation or non–creation of oneness of class cannot be meant here.

Anyhow, this was one of the greatest intellectual distortions which was made towards this ideological principle of Islam, and sometimes it was even said: "Basically God in Islam is a moral concept and is not propounded as a true and real being." Sometims it was said: "God and the Hereafter do not have philosophical concept, rather utter goodness, absolute perfection, forgoing worldly pleasures and profits and in one word moral ideal is the very God and He has no external existence either (God forbid) and that we should pursue these absolute words and try to become perfect and that worshipping God means just this."

Wrong Imaginations concerning the Meaning of At –Tawhid

Some others believed that just giving the world a movement by Allah and so to say His giving the world a start suffices for the world wheel to rotate till eternity, without being in any need of Allah again. Such a way of thinking existed even among some philosophers and probably that some philosophers of the ancient Greece called God as the first stimulant has stemmed from this very thought. Some groups of Islamic philosophers have also had such inclinations and it is regrettable that such a deviational way of thinking has been from those who also believed in the Only Allah, let alone the atheists and the polytheists.

Such way of thinking, namely, to think that Allah's work is just the creation of this world, or at most inflicting the first blow or the primary stimulation, is totally rejected in Islam.

Allah (SWT) introduced by Islam is the One Who is constantly planning the world matters and Who if does not will the survival of the world for even a single moment, every thing will be destroyed and the very non–will of Allah for the survival of the world suffices for the world to be destroyed and in such a case, there is no need for Allah to destroy the world, like a builder who takes a pick and destroys a building. The destruction of the world does not need such a process.

Although, with our imperfect minds, we cannot realize the true relation of Allah and the world, but for approximation to the mind, it can be said that the mental images which are created in the mind, the scene of a garden, battlefield and or other things are created by the mind and despite their being existing in the mind and their being capable of creating certain effects[8], yet their survival is subject to Allah's attention and His will and if Allah's will and his attention is removed from them, there will no longer be left any thing. The God introduced by Islam is such a God upon Whose will depends the whole world of being and Who if wishes something to come into existence, it will come into existence and if wills the destruction of something, that thing will be destroyed. The emphasis of the Holy Qur'ān, too, is in the first place, on the concept of **Rabb** (The Lord), ie, we should know Allah as **Rabb** (The Lord). The slogan of Islam is not "there is no creator but Allah", so to think that the world only needs creation and from then on, namely, after being created it will stand on its own, is not an Islamic thought.

Some, too, had imagined that the meaning of "Allah plans the world" is that a pre–made plan has been fulfilled in hundreds and thousand years past, in the way that Allah, has, for example, drawn a map and arranged the world factors according to that map and has no longer any concern for and attention to the world, and has nothing to do with the world affairs. This was the belief

held by some Jews. They said: "God has created the world and should also plan it, but not (plan it) always, rather, in the beginning of creation, God has made a plan, drawn a map and implemented it on the world and does not interfere in the world affairs any longer."

The Holy Qur'ān quotes them as saying:

"و قالت اليهود يد اللّه مغلولة غلت ايديهم و لعنوا بما قالوا، بل يداه مبسوطتان ..."

"And the Jews said: "Allāh's hand is tied up." May their hands be tied and they be cursed for what they said. Nay, both His hands are stretched out ... (5:64)."

They thought that God has implemented a plan/map and that His hands are then tied up, like an engineer who draws the map of a building, implements and constructs it and when it has been constructed, the engineer can no longer change it, (They thought) that God, too, had a plan for the world, implemented it in the world and it will continue to be implemented forever and it cannot be changed any longer (God forbid). These beliefs of the Jews in matters of creation and religious legislations had some manifestations. On the one hand, they say that since the planning of the world is unchangeable, so praying and appealing are of no use and do not solve any problem. On the other hand, they believed that the system of religious law which God has ordained for the world and which is also not changeable, is the very system Prophet Mūsā (Moses) (AS) has brought from the Almighty Allah as tablets and that since God's will has rested upon these decrees and it is unchangeable, so abrogation in decrees does not exist either. Such a thought is not acceptable in the viewpoint of Islam. The Holy Qur'ān says:

"...كل يوم هو فى شأن"

"... Every moment He is in a state (of glory) (55:29)."

According to the Holy Qur'ān, Allah is planning the world the every day and every moment, and any moment He wills, He can change the plans of the world and nothing has and will come outside His powerful hands and all things are in His hands. No force affects Him and no factor ties up His hands. Of course it should be noted that there are also immutable divine destinations and immutable divine decrees, but this does not mean that we should think that the world system is a compulsory system, that man has no right in it, and that prayers, appealing (to Allah), reliance on Allah, endeavours, efforts and **jihād** (endeavouring in the way of Allah) cannot change pre–destinations. There are changeable pre–destinations which are changed with **jihād**.

The Subject of Badā'

Here, it is useful to also point out the subject of badā' (the belief that Allah (SWT) can change the world affairs at any moment). To believe that at any moment Allah can change the trends of the world, nullify the past factors, create more powerful factors in their place, is termed as **badā'** in the terminology of Islamic learnings. There is a **riwāyah** as follows:

"ما عبد الله بشيء مثل البداء" "No 'ibādah (Allah's worship) is superior to belief in Badā'[9]", that is, the same belief which is set forth in the face of people like the Jews and due to which one (having such belief) notices that in any situation, Allah is able to change the causes and requirements and bring about new conditions. This belief, on one hand, makes one hopeful of the future, so that even if apparent causes are not at hand, he will not despair and lose hope and on the other hand makes him fearful about his own future, and

this is the very thing which is desirable in the value system of Islam. That is to say, man should always be in a state between fear and hopefulness, so that he will fully realize his need of Allah (his being invariably in need of Allah) and so, if a misfortune befalls him, he will not think that this misfortune is lasting and that it will not be removed. If there is a misfortune (facing him), he should be hopeful of its removal, in the way that he should start struggling and making efforts and also beseech Allah so his problem will be solved. If he has a material and worldly blessing, he should not become proud and gay and should not think that this blessing is ever-lasting and that he will never lose it. Even for the survival of his spiritual blessings, man should constantly be stretching his hands (for begging) to Allah and should beseech Allah to make those blessings lasting for him. For instance, this very Islamic Republic system is one of the greatest gifts and blessings Allah has granted us. If we know the value of this blessing and are thankful for it, it will continue, otherwise there is no guarantee for its survival.

Clarification of Mechanical and Dynamic Movements

Earlier it has been mentioned that some Western scientists have imagined that God has just inflicted a stimulating force on the world and that He has no longer any thing to do with it and that the world itself with this movement and transference of power becomes the cause of other movements and developments in the world of matters and gradually brings the phenomena into existence.

Some others have imagined the movement of the world of nature to be dynamic, that is, if in the above-mentioned way of thinking, God was thought of as the Creator of power in the world of nature, in this way of thinking only the existence of the nature is attributed to Allah (SWT) and the developments

of the world are attributed to the dynamic movement of the matter itself. These individuals had in fact accepted the same view of dialectic materialism and considered the developments of the world to be dynamic developments and just for having an Islamic colour, they said: "The essence of the matter has been created by God, but He no longer has any role in it and the developments of the matter and the emergence of new and new phenomena are as a result of the dynamic movement of the nature itself, and it is the world which through its natural movement gradually brings about changes and creates phenomena. The phenomena of life, too, gradually come into existence in the world and evolve into various animals till they reach man." (Just as the so-called 'theory of evolution' is illustrated.).

Between this way of thinking and the Islamic view there is a difference of 180 degrees. The Holy Qur'ān teaches us that the Almighty Allah is continuously involved in creation and that no being, in any moment is needless of Allah. To reject the above view (dynamic movement), we start with the most simple reasons which are understandable, perceivable and absorbable and with a simple expression which does not need accurate philosophical foundations either, we say that dynamic movement, supposing that it exists in the essence of the nature and is clarifiable and acceptable in a way, can never cause the emergence of a new being, because, just as mechanical movement is nothing but the transference of an object from one place to the other, dynamic movement is also nothing more than the natural development of the matter itself and can never create a new being which is not of the category of matter and the materials and which has not been in the matter before, either, though it can create developments in the lifeless matter.

We constantly see that living beings come into existence in the world, possessed of intelligence, senses, emotions (and in the case of man) possessed

of initiative, free–will, creativity, qualities which cannot be attributed to the matter, and even the materialists themselves admit this reality that intelligence and will–power is not a material matter and do not have the quality of the matter, but to justify their view, they say: "These are brought into existence by themselves and as a result of the developments of the matter"– a view which means the emergence of a being without a cause and without a creator.

Anyhow, it is obvious that natural movement, whether it be thought of in the mechanical form (namely, as a result of the force which enters the object from outside) or in the dynamic form (which is the natural requisite of the matter itself and the matter is naturally mobile and dynamic) does not create soul and life, intelligence and will–power do not come into existence from it.

So, the emergence of living phenomena, both animal and man which is taking place in this world continuously indicates that a creator is continuously giving life to these creatures and creates them and that not just once, but in various stages. For instance, man, though has one soul, but does not have one creation. The Holy Qur'ān says:

"... يخلقكم فى بطون امهاتكم خلقاً من بعد خلق ..."

"... *He creates you in the wombs of your mothers – a creation after a creation (39:6).*"

From the moment human sperm enters (mother's) womb, creations start, when it turns into **'alaqah** (clot), it acquires a new share of life which it has not had before. This (being given the) sahre of existence requires a creator, because the sperm itself does not possess the perfections of **'alaqah**, nor can it create those perfections. These perfections have been granted to it by the

Creator. The Holy Qur'ān says:

"ثم خلقنا النطفة علقة فخلقنا العلقة مضغة، فخلقنا المضغة عظاما، فكسونا العظام لحما، ثم انشأناه خلقا اخر ..."

"Then We made the life–germ a clot, then We made the clot a lump of flesh, then We made (in) the lump of flesh bones, then We clothed the bones with flesh, then We caused it to grow into another creation ... (23:14)."

Each development it acquires, and each new share of existence it gets, is a new creation which has to be granted by Allah (to it). The creation of the essence of the matter, is not sufficient for the creation of these new perfections of existence which are being realized anew and this makes no difference with regard to man, animals and the plants.

A plant–seed, when placed inside the earth, absorbs water, is soaked, and physical and chemical effects are developed in it. But when the seed starts growing, stretches a root inside the earth and sends a stem out of the ground, it has acquired new shares of life and existence which it did not have before. These effects do not exist in a dead seed, nor can dynamic movement create this plant movement. Then it grows, turns into a stem and bears branches and leaves. These, too, have a new life and a fresh share of existence. The same holds true of flowers, blossoms, beautiful and startling colours, pleasant smells; by the time the fruit appears, each have a new creation which is fulfilled by the Creator. To move further, even the beings in whom new developments are not observed and who are thought of as having a monotonous existence, has to receive their existence from the Creator at any moment.

So, in general, the beings at each and every moment need to be granted life by the Almighty Allah. We, who are seated or standing here now, do not have our tomorrow's life and existence. We may be destroyed and so there would be no tomorrow for us. So the tomorrow's existence does not exist now and a Creator will create it tomorrow. Tomorrow may be too far (for our discussion): Let's consider the next hour. We do not own, nor have the existence of the next hour. When the next hour comes, Allah will grant us that existence. Let us also set aside the next hour and consider the next minute. We do not own our own life in the next minute, it is also in Allah's hands. If He wills, He will grant us this existence and if He does not will, our life will not continue.

If we acquire such a knowledge about the Almighty Allah, it is then that we can accept, admit and believe in Allah's hand in all existence and in all conditions. But that view which says: 'God created the matter, but then it is the automatic movement of the matter which becomes the source of the emergence of beings', will never acquire such a knowledge (of God). Those who hold such a view, regard themselves as having been left to themselves in the world, neither realizing any need to God, nor expecting any help from Him. In their view, God created a matter which is automatically moving, or/and that according to mechanical imagination, God inflicted the primary movement upon this world and has no more any thing to do with it, like a clock which a skillful clock–maker makes and tunes in such a way that its tune continues to exist for ever and does not need to be tuned anew.

Usually, when clocks are tuned, after a while, due to the gradual consumption of the mechanical energy, they come to need tuning anew. But if the system is arranged so that this energy which remains inside the clock is not consumed, is again transferred to the spring and causes the movement of

the hands of the clock to continue till eternity, there will no longer be any need for the clock–maker and the tuner. Some have thought of the world current this way and imagined that God has tuned and then set aside the world. Another group says that the world did not even need the primary tuning either, that this is the inherent movement of the nature which automatically emerges in it and proceeds to any place the causes and conditions might demand. These are not Islamic views. These are the modern forms of **shirk**. In the view of Islam, the existence of the world is in Allah's hands at each and every moment successively and ceaselessly, each being, with whatever share of existence it may be endowed and whatever sign of existence it may acquire, receives it from Allah (SWT) and is in need of Him, so that if He does not will the existence of the world for even a single moment, the whole world will be brought to naught. In Islamic way of thinking, no power other than the power of the Almighty Allah governs the world of being. The other powers are a limited ray of His infinite power, are dominated by Him and are effective just to the extent He has granted permission in creation for their effectiveness.

"والشمس والقمر و النجوم مسخرات بامره الا له الخلق والامر
تبارك الله رب العالمين."

"*... And (He created) the sun and the moon and the stars, made subservient by His command: surely His is the creation and the command; blessed is Allah, the Lord of the worlds ... (7:54).*"

The movement of the moon and the stars, the shining of the sun, the growth of each plant, the splitting of even a single seed, and/or a sick man's

being healed are all with the will of Allah and subdued by His will–Power. If Allah does not will, no being can do any thing.

The holders of such (an Islamic) view, attach no value to any power (other than Allah's) and let no fear enter their hearts in the face of the threats of the enemies of Islam, because they know that wherever any power exists, it is dominated by Allah's will–power.

"... واللّه غالب على امره ..."

"... *Allah is the Master of His affair ... (12:21).*"

It is such spirit that makes the Muslim combatant at the front of jihād so strong that he fears nothing, because he knows that:

"ان ينصركم اللّه فلا غالب لكم، و ان يخذ لكم فمن ذا الذى ينصركم من بعده ..."

"*If Allah assists you, then there is none to overcome you, and if He forsakes you, who is there to assist you after Him (3:160).*"

Those who have been raised with such a culture, bow their heads to no power (other than Allah), to them every thing is humble and worthless and to them is valuable only that which has a way to Allah and which is related to the source of power, greatness and glory, (ie, Allah), as the Holy Qur'ān says:

"... و للّه العزة و لرسوله و للمؤمنين ..."

"... *And to Allah belongs the might and to His Messenger and to the believers ... (63:8).*"

Glory and honour is for Allah, His messengers and the believers and the others are all abject and humiliated. If there is glory, it is that which Allah has granted and He has ordained this degree, in the first place for the exalted position of the Holy Prophet of Islam, Muhammad **Al–Muṣṭafā** (SA) and after him, to the extent any person is closer to Allah (SWT), whose faith is greater and whose relation to Him is firmer, enjoys such a glory.

It is with the Islamic view that a Muslim views all the forces of the nature as nothing before the infinite divine power and feels such glory and greatness inside himself which make him invincible. He knows that power is not just these material powers, though these very material powers are also created by Allah and the power over them lies in Allah's hands, rather the supernatural powers and the divine aids are also in Allah's hand. Where He wills, the water of the Nile River drowns Fir'awn (Pharaoh) and his men in itself and where He wills, one divine cry from heavens destroys and vanishes a people. Therefore, **At–Tawḥīd** in creation demands that one believes that each creature in any condition, any place and at any time is in need of Allah and will never be needless of Him.

Divine Management

The next stage is the stage of **Rububiyyah**. In this stage, one should not only believe that creation is from Allah, but should rather believe that the developments of the matter, and the relation of creatures with each other, the effects they make and the effects made upon them are all under Allah's management and command. Here, again two extreme inclinations exist: some, when faced with these expressions (related to **At–Tawḥīd**) of the Holy Qur'ān, imagined that the meaning of **At–Tawḥīd** in creation and in Lordship is that no other creature has any effect of its own (as is observed in the

Ashā'irah (Ash'arite) school of thought) and these materially affecting and being affected is just a superficial relationship or as some say: "God's habit has ordained that when fire falls on a piece of wood, it burns, otherwise there is no relation between them."

Though their goal and motive of making such remarks has been to reach the ultimate degree of **At–Tawḥīd**, but they have neglected the fact that the Almighty Allah is not incapable of giving an effect to its creature. It is true that the essence of being is from Allah and each creature in any moment receives its being, its existence from Him, but this does not mean that no being has any effect. If it meant so, then the system of divine legislation would be a meaningless system. If the words you speak, the voice you hear, the decision you take, the work you do, the acts of worship you fulfil and the **jihād** you embark upon were not the effects of your being, and you had no role in their creation, then in this case there would be no difference between the obedient and the disobedient, since (according to the above supposition) Allah (SWT) had created the one obedient and the other disobedient. So, why should He reward the former and punish the latter? The impression of causes and reasons on the emergence of effects is not deniable. However, the fact to be emphasized is that these are all subordinate to a higher power, that it is He Who constantly grants them the grace of existence and endows them the signs of existence and renders them effective with His own permission. Let us consider a statement of the Holy Qur'ān in this regard. It says:

"... و اذ تخلق من الطين كهيئة الطير بإذنى ..."

"... And when you determined out of clay a thing like the form of a bird by my permission ... (5:110)."

In the above āyah, the Almighty Allah addressing 'Isā (AS) (Jesus Christ), the son of Maryam (AS), says that he brings into existence, but with His (Allah's) will and that he heals (the blind and the leper) but with His (Allah's) will . That is to say, the authority and the will has not come outside Allah's hand. This is the light of existence which emanates from Allah, but at the hands of Ibrāhīm (AS) (Prophet Abraham), Ismā'īl (AS) (Prophet Ishmael), 'jsā (AS) or Mūsā (AS) (Prophet Moses), or any other of Allah's Prophets (AS) and **awliyā'** and through the channel of their will-Power, choice and option. The whole matter lies just here. To totally deny the impression of causes, would be to believe that the world is based on fatalism, leaving no room for duty, all learnings should be washed away, because (according to such assumptions) they no longer have any relation to each other, no cause affects any effect, no microbe has any role in the emergence of sickness and no medicine cures any ailment. But this is not the case. Allah has put this effect in the medicine and the medicine falls effective with Allah's permission, and this matter makes no difference whether in natural matters and/or in supernatural matters and the prophet who heals a sick man also does so with Allah's permission. Those who have not been able to understand the combination between these two imagine that if we say that a prophet, an Imam or one of Allah's friends has healed a sick person, this will become **shirk**.

Anyhow, Allah may grant a power to His walī (friend) to revive a sick person by His permission or to manifest other miracles and wonderful workings. But those who have thoughts that the man is compelled to do every thing and has no option, by attributing actions and effects to Allah in a direct manner, are considerable preys for the colonialists, the oppressors and the tyrants, as in the time of the Omayyads and the Abbasides, under the pretext

of strengthening the spirit of **At −Tawḥīd**, they more or less spread these thoughts that the man is compelled and not free, thereby creating weakness in the people, while these two facts should be understood together, combined together, and attain the great effects resulting from them. Both the spirit of **At−Tawḥīd** should be completely strengthened, namely, no independent power exists but that of the Almighty Allah and also the effect of causes and particularly the effect of man in his optional acts should be taken into consideration and it should be known that the basis of religions is the recognition of free−will. If there had been no free−will, then no room would be left for teaching, guidance, revelation of Books, sending prophets, warning and giving good tidings (by Allah). The prophets warn the people against Allah's torment which befalls them due to their bad actions, whereas if there were compulsions (as fatalists hold) then no room would be left for fear and torment.

Divine Wilāyah

With these introductory statements we conclude that not only the planning of the whole world as a total system is in Allah's hand, but also every trivial system and every small system has also its own plan which is fulfilled under Allah's will−power. In the midst of all these, man's plan, because of his miscellaneous virtues and aptitudes, has very extensive and widespread dimensions each of which necessitates a particular plan (or management). That part of divine plan which concerns sense−possessing creatures including man is in the language of the Holy Qur'an, called **wilāyah**.

In the Holy Qur'ān, we come across **āyāt** in which the words **walī** (Islamic jurisprudential guardian), **wālī** (governor, ruler) and **Mawlā** (master) have been employed and mentioned as names and attributes for the Almighty

Allah. All these have been derived from the root **wilāyah** which briefly includes the meaning of taking charge of and managing the affairs of the sense–possessing beings. That is, the Almighty Allah, after creating man, does not leave him to himself. Rather, He has undertaken the planning of his life and arranges the events so that he can go ahead in the direction of perfection and growth. (That we say: "he can go ahead in the direction of perfection" is beacause man is a free agent, possessed of free–will and in spite of the existence of all conditions and facilities, still he can misuse the same and traverse the way of fall and decline instead of following the way of perfection and exalltation.).

However, Allah's work in this field is fulfilled in two dimensions or in two stages; one pertains to **Al–Wilāyatul–'āmmah** (general guardianship) towards all men and the other pertains to **al–wilāyatul–khāṣṣah** (particular guardianship). The Almighty Allah in all periods of history and in all parts of the world has laws and traditions which provide the grounds for the growth and perfection of all men. This is a general guardianship which is implemented towards all men, whether some people accept this guardianship and submit themselves to the position of divine guardianship, or they indulge in **kufr** and rebellion (against Allah's commands). Any how, this true divine guardianship exists towards the faithful and the infidel, the pious and the impious and will become manifest on the Resurrection Day.

"هنا لك الولاية للّه الحق ..."

"Here is protection only Allah's, the True One ... (18:44)."

It is then that divine guardianship becomes manifest, and it becomes known that His wise management has been and is governing over the whole

world.

But the Holy Qur'ān, in many cases, has also talked about particular guardianship which is only for the **mu'minīn** and the **muwahhidūn**, namely, those who make good use of these grounds and have attempted to achieve their free perfection. This **wilāyah** does not concern the infidel, the libertine, **munāfiqūn** and those who are obstinate (towards Allah's commands) and they are outside the domain of this **wilāyah**. In a sense, they have been left to themselves (by Allah) and only that very general divine planning governs them.

Al–Wilāyatul–Khāṣṣah has very different stages. For example, the one who takes even a small step in the way of Allah and fulfils a small action for Allah, he will have a low stage of this guardianship and a limited share of divine favour will embrace him. Of course, if a **mū'min** makes proper use of this particular blessing of Allah and appreciates it, this very favour which has embraced him in the first stage, prepares him for taking a larger step and achieving greater growth and also causes him to receive more favour from Allah. However, if he stops at this stage, he has enjoyed just this very stage of guardianship and will no longer reach higher stages. Anyhow, if a faithful person, **ie**, a **mu'min** benefits from and makes good use of divine guardianship and takes more steps in the way of his own perfection, Allah will shower loftier favours upon him and in this way these stages continue till they reach the most excellent position which a man may attain and that position is the sacred position of Allah's **Walī** and His Last Messenger, Prophet Muhammad ibn 'Abdullāh (SA). Therefore, to the extent the man submits to Allah and makes his own will subject to Allah's will, and the more he uses Allah's blessings for his spiritual and real perfection, the more he will enjoy the blessing of divine guardianship.

The first step in the way of attaining divine guardianship is faith in Allah, pious deeds and struggle against ṭāghūt (Satan):

"... فمن يكفر بالطاغوت و يؤمن باللّه فقد استمسك بالعروة الوثقىٰ لا انفصام لها واللّه سميع عليم."

"... Therefore, whoever denies the ṭāghūt and believes in Allah, he indeed has a strong hold of the firmest handle, which shall not break off: and Allah is Hearing, Knowing (2:256)"

Such a person has taken hold of the surest and firmest handle, and will save himself from perilous situations. In the continuation of the above **āyah** it is said:

"اللّه ولى الذين آمنوا يخرجهم من الظلمات الى النور ..."

"Allah is the guardian of those who believe. He brings them out of the darkness into the light ... (2:257)."

Those who believe in Allah and turn their back to **ṭāghūt**, Allah will undertake the planning of their affairs and takes them out of darkness and leads them towards light.

But those who are **kāfir** are deprived of such guardianship, supervision and management and their supervision is with **ṭāghūts**.

"... والذين كفروا اولياؤهم الطاغوت ..."

"... And (as to) those who disbelieve, their guardians are the ṭāghūts ... (2:257)."

Faith and pious deeds which are conditions required for aptitude for divine guardianship and the enjoyment of Allah's particular favour, have different dimensions and stages and go ahead so far that Allah plans all the good for man, provides the means for their attainment and even more important than this, man reaches such a level where according to the following **riwāyāt:**

"حتىٰ كنت سمعه الذي يسمع به و بصره الذي يبصر به و يده التي يبطش بها"

"The man reaches such a level where as if It is Allah Who hears in place of his ear, and sees in place of his eyes and moves in place of his hands.[10] "

It is obvious that Allah does not leave the affairs of such people to themselves, and rather He inspires them to what they should achieve through taking pains of experience and intellect, and even where their ordinary forces are not sufficient for the fulfilment of their affairs, Allah sends them divine hidden aids.

One dimension of divine guardianship is in relation to human societies and communities. Allah's planning and guardianship is sometimes for each and every one of human beings, and sometimes for the formation of divine communities which is fulfilled on a very extensive level and which has innumerable blessings. When Allah sees the merit for perfection in a people and observes some good in them, He provides the ground for their growth.

When human society achieved the aptitude for the emergence of the Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam, the Almighty Allah provided the grounds for the emergence of a monotheistic and Islamic society in the Arabian Peninsula. Allah created a man from the family of the past prophets (AS), raised him so

that at the age of forty he was appointed (by Allah) a prophet and when a group of people came to believe in him and followed his way sincerely, Allah provided greater grounds for their growth and provided conditions so that they took steps towards perfection. Certain hardships occurred, sometimes people were troubled also, but Allah provides all grounds for the formation of a strong Islamic society, a society which can create a great development in the world.

Our Islamic Revolution was also like this. For centuries various conditions occurred for the Islamic society, Muslims had vacillations, peaks and abysses, until the Almighty Allah knew that a people in a country named Iran are ready for divine particular favour and from such people a society can be made which can be the standard bearer of At-Tawhīd throughout the earth. The Almighty Allah created a man from the family of prophets (AS) and the Infallible Imams (AS), raised him (to a lofty spiritual and intellectual level), taught him the required awareness, information and all-sided and comprehensive knowledge from Islam (of course through causes) and when a movement was to be started in the society, this man, (Al Imām Al-Khumaynī (QS)) cried out his Tawhīdī clamours and called on the people to move, till finally, in the year 1979 AD (1357 of solar Hejirah), they created a great resurrection (The Islamic Revolution of Iran) on the earth.

The particular divine guardianship is not limited to one stage and one phase and it can be said that it has innumerable stages, provided however that we properly observe the conditions for each stage and take more advantage of the possibilities which the Almighty Allah grants us and be thankful to Him for the blessing. (ie, we use Allah's blessing in the way He Himself) has ordained and we do not use them against His commands and will).

All that men should fulfil in the direction of benefitting from Allah's

blessings and favours are summed up under one main title and that title is: "Servitude to Allah".

"و ان اعبدونی هذا صراطٌ مستقیم"

"And that you should serve Me; this is the right way (36:61)."

This servitude (to Allah) manifests itself in two general forms, one in the attainment of more understandings and the other in the performance of better actions.

At–Tawḥīd in Guidance

At–Tawḥīd in **Rubūbiyyah** has numerous branches. One of its branches is **At–Tawḥīd** in guidance. The teaching of the Holy Qur'ān concerning the knowledge about **At–Tawḥīd** is that just as the Almighty Allah has granted the existence to every being, He has also granted particular guidance to every being. After **Mūsā** (Moses) (AS) and **Harūn** (Aaron) (AS) announced their call and prophetic mission **Fir'awn** (Pharaoh) asked them: "Who is that Lord to Whose worship you call me?" Prophet Mūsā (AS) replied:

"ربنا الذی اعطی کل شیء خلقه ثم هدی"

"Our Lord is He Who gave to everything its creation, then guided it (20:50)."

As the above āyah of Holy Qur'ān appears to indicate, just as creation has universality and includes every being, divine guidance is also a general guidance which includes all beings. Of course we will later on elaborate that besides this general guidance which includes all beings, there is also a

particular guidanc which is particularly provided to **mu'minūn**, just as it is the case with *wilāyah*.

The general divine guidance has several parts; one the guidance which pertains to senseless creatures, such as material and natural creatures which have been created in this world. the other Kind of guidance concerns sense-possessing creatures which have just one direction and are just active in that very direction, such as the angels (may greetings be upon them). The other kind of guidance is for the creatures which have animal sense and finally there is a guidance which concerns man – the being who besides the instinctive sense has intellectual sense and in whose direction there are two different ways of which he selects one.

To give more explanation for these parts, it should be said that each being which is created in this world, from the smallest particle to the greatest galaxies, so far as man's knowledge and information have reached them, has particular effect and movement which have been placed in a determined direction.

The smallest particle which man has known so far is called atom. Inside atom there is a nucleus around which small particles named electrons revolve. This movement is a particular movement in a determined axis and particular direction. The Omnipotent Allah has created this invisible, little and tiny particle such that the electrons traverse their own way inside it and never follow any way against the direction Allah has determined for them and the electrons do not go out of their axis/orbit unduly. This orderliness is on the basis of the law which Allah has placed in the nature of this being and for this reason we call it a creational and natural guidance, namely, these effects and movements, with particular directions and special qualities are all subject to the creation the Almighty Allah has granted them.

After the atoms, there are the molecules which are formed of a number of atoms. The formation of molecules which takes place with particular composition, condition and manner, so that particular effects of them would be realized in the world is also a kind of divine creational guidance. Molecules gradually turn into a complicated form and are combined and from them various matters come into being.

In chemistry, there is a wonderful story of how the atoms are put together in a particular way and how these atoms bring into existence these various objects with great and complicated properties. Really, Who has created these things in such a way and has put these properties in them that they rest beside each other in such ways?

After mineral and chemical matters, we enter the world of plants. The stone of a tree is put in the earth. It uses the moisture and heat of the earth. Gradually, the shell of this stone splits, a root is sent inside the earth and a stem is sent out of the ground and the next stages which a plant goes through from the start to the end follow. This is the law and guidance the Almighty Allah has put in the world of plants according to which they absorb the food particles from the earth, combine and analyze them, so that they partly turn into leaves and partly into branches. The more we study about the world of plants, the more wonderfully we will observe the signs of divine guidance.

In the world of animals, divine guidance emerges in more strange form Among plants, we did not know of any sense, though it has been said that some plants have a weak sense. For example, among trees it is known that the Palm trees have a weak sense, or that some plants are carnivorous and hunt their preys with their leaves, in the way that when an animal sits on their leaves, the leaves contract, draw that animal inside themselves, digest it and grow in this way, but generally in plants we do not recognize and know of

such senses (intelligence) and even if it does exist, we cannot distinguish, But, there are other groups of beings in whom the signs of senses (intelligence) are quite clearly apparent and everybody can understand that such beings possess particular senses. A chicken, as soon as it comes out of the egg, goes under the wings of its mother; if feels cold, and hits with its pecks at the ground, if feels hungry Each Kind of animals has its particular senses.

There are some fish who go hundreds of kilometers in the sea to reach a place which is fit for laying eggs and where their eggs are not destroyed, and then they return. The fish which come out of the eggs and open their eyes to the sea for the first time, traverse the same route their mothers have traversed and return to their place. One of the animals about which the Holy Qur'ān has particularly discussed is the bee.

The particular sense of this animal in making hexagonal houses and its providing its food from various flowers and blossoms, its storing them and the other phases of its life are distinguished proofs for this claim. Also there are birds which make nests for themselves for the first time, without having seen it (being made) anywhere before. For instance, we see that swallows make nests in a particular from in the roofs of houses, in a safe place and lay eggs there, and/or we see that domestic hens, after laying eggs, sleep on them and every now and then turn them over. If the hen were asked why it sleeps on the eggs, perhaps it had no reply to give. of course we do not know of the inside of the soul of the hen and do not know what senses and understandings it has. But it seems very probable that it does not have a logical answer for this action, only a desire is created inside it that drives it to such acts.

These are divine teachings and guidance. No one has taught such things to hens and to thousands of kinds of animals each of which has particular characteristics, rather Allah has revealed to them. About such kinds of

instinctive guidances, the Holy Qur'ān applies the expression **Waḥy** (divine revelation).

"و اوحی ربك الی النحل ..."

"And your Lord revealed to the bee ... (16:68)."

This is a mysterious and unknown learning which is not understandable for the others and which is developed in the inside of the animal.

The other kind of guidance is for sense–possessing beings which have but one direction, such as the angels (greetings be upon them). They are very noble and intelligent beings, but they fulfil their actions only at Allah's command.

"... بل عباد مکرمون لا یسبقونه بالقول و هم بأمره یعملون."

"... Nay! they are honoured servants; They do not precede Him in speech and (only) according to His commandment do they act (21:27)."

This group of creatures whose being we understand just through the information given by the Almighty Allah and the Infallibles (AS), have particular guidance and perform the very action which Allah – The Almighty has determined for them and of which the way of performance He has taught them. There is a group of the angels whose function is to write down the actions of men. Allah has created them for this very action and has also taught them how to fulfil their function and from the beginning of creation up to now, their work has been and will be this. The other group (of the angels) are in charge of means of subsistence and the third group in charge of the other works of creation.

The kinds of the angels mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān have each a specific

position, special work and particular guidance and they are all engaged in praising, glorifying and extolling Allah.

"... و نحن نسبح بحمدك و نقدس لك ..."

"... *And we celebrate Thy praise and extol Thy holiness ... (2:30).*"

Though in the Holy Qur'ān the sort of praising (Allah) and even acts of worship and prayers have been proved for all beings, but we do not really understand how birds in the sky perform prayers or praise Allah.

The Holy Qur'ān says:

"... كل قد علم صلوٰته و تسبيحه ..."

"... *He knows the prayer of each one and its glorification ... (24:41).*"

In another place, the Holy Qur'ān says:

"... و ان من شيء الا يسبح بحمده و لكن لا تفقهون تسبيحهم ..."

"... *And there is not a single thing but glorifies Him with His praise, but you do not understand their glorification ... (17:44).*"

The Guidance Particular to Man

Amidst these guidances man is blessed with an excellent guidance. Man is an essence of the whole system of creation; right from the characteristics of atoms, molecules, protein and chemical matters to the vegetal, animal and

instinctive characteristics are all found in his being. But above all these things, there is a guidance which has privileged and distinguished him from other creatures and which has made him superior even to angels, and that is the power of the intellect which the Almighty Allah has bestowed in man's being so that he can understand certain facts both in theoretical dimension and the practical one. In regard to man, mere instinctive inspiration, which exists in animals, has not been contented with. Of course human infant has an instinctive understanding too. For example, it knows how to suck its mother's breast and when feeling pain, how to make known its pain through crying and groaning. This is an instinctive sense which exists in animals too. But on man's reaching maturity, another sense appears in him the like of which (sense) and that too to such an extent does not exist in animals. Man, being possessed with this characteristic, makes intellectual analyses and logical reasonings, becomes informed about unseen facts and finds out about their existence. We know that scientists have assumed in their minds many of the scientific theories without having any information about their external existence and then proved the same with analogies and experience. Man even possesses such an ability that through intellect besides innate understanding and the knowledge which is acquired not through using the five senses but through illumination into the heart, can achieve a conscious and acquired understanding towards the Almighty Allah and His attributes and best names and this is a very great and noble power and very constructive and significant for man's perfection. Also, in the practical part, human intellect has the ability to distinguish good and bad, praiseworthy and indecent in doings and actions. Allah has put this power in man to recognize both the good directions and the bad ones, to know both the way of impiety and the way of virtuousness, to recognize both the way of justice and truth and the way of

oppression, tyranny and injustice; and with profound insight he can select any one he wishes.

The Holy Qur'ān says:

"انا هديناه السبيل، امّا شاكراً و امّا كفوراً."

"Surely We have shown him the way: he may be thankful or unthankful (76:3)."

Thus without any thing being compulsorily imposed upon him to acquire perfection of his truth with his own choice.

The existence of the power of intellect causes man to recognize the generalities of the matters and the main lines of truth and falsehood, but in detailed and minute cases, he needs another guidance[11]. Allah – The Wise Who has created man for voluntary perfection, has not spared him such guidance either and has compensated for the defect in his understanding and recognition by **Wahy** and **Nubuwwah**. Thus, to the first man (Adam (AS)) He created, besides giving him the power of intellect, Allah also made revelation and ordained him one of the prophets, and later The Almighty Allah also appointed other prophets (AS) according to what His wisdom demanded, so that the deficiencies in the insights of the intellect in theoretical and practical grounds, which are needed by men, are compensated.

So, in reality, the greatest blessing the Almighty Allah has granted man, is this particular guidance which is summed up in two parts, one the guidance of the intellect and the other the guidance of the **Wahy**. In other words, the Almighty Allah has ordained two kinds of proof and guide for men: one the inner proof, namely, the intellect and since this proof was not sufficient, Allah has also arranged another proof outside the being of the individuals, (namely, the prophets (AS)) which compensates for the deficiency in the insight of the

intellect.

So far, for the general guidances, ie, the guidances of the contents of which both the **mu'min** and the **kāfir**, the virtuous and the unvirtuous can be informed, but just as the guardianship of Allah over the creatures has two parts: one the general guardianship which includes the **mu'min** and the **kāfir** equally, and the other guardianship which is particular to the **mu'min** and of which guardianship the **kāfirūn** have no share, the same is also true of guidance. That is, besides the general guidance, there is another guidance particular to the **mu'min** the honour of which only includes those who sincerely tread the way of servitude to Allah.

After the reaching of the guidance of the **wahy** to the people, people divide towards it into two groups: One group being those people who accept the divine guidance and believe in the **Wahy** and in prophethood and who also follow the orders of the prophets (AS) in performing their deeds. The other group of people, with their wrong choice, ignore and disregard this guidance and do not put it as the source of effect in their lives. These two groups, though will each receive the reward (or the torment) for their good and bad actions, will not be the same in this very world either. Upon those who are thankful for the blessing of guidance, who behave in the way Allah has commanded and who know the value of this blessing, Allah increases His blessing:

"والذين اهتدوا زادهم هدى ..."

"And (as for) those who follow the right direction, He increases them in guidance ... (47:17)."

And in contrast, as for those who are unthankful, Allah will turn their hearts away from the truth.

"... فلما زاغوا، ازاغ اللّه قلوبهم ..."

"... But when they turned aside, Allah made their hearts turn aside ... (61:5)."

But the Holy Qur'ān depicts the way of achieving this true guidance:

"... قد جائكم من اللّه نور و كتاب مبين، يهدى به اللّه من اتبع رضوانه سبل السلام ..."

"... There has come to you light and a clear Book from Allah: with it Allah guides him who will follow His pleasure into the ways of safety ... (5:15–16)."

Those attain true guidance who possess this spiritual and cordial condition, namely, being desirous and in search of Allah's pleasure and satisfaction and this condition is not achieved unless with possessing the following levels: Faith, holding fast to Allah in action and love for Allah and it is in the wake of these attainments that man attempts to acquire Allah's pleasure and satisfaction and such men will enjoy the spiritual light of the Holy Qur'ān and the particular divine guidance. This guidance is just and only just in Allah's hand and It is He Who creates such a light in their hearts.

Therefore, to be able to benefit both from the particular divine guidance and also to be embraced by particular Allah's guardianship, we should appreciate Allah's blessings, abandon egotism and replace it with theism and Godliness. This will not be achieved by mere slogans, nor is it acquired by just performing the prayers. Rather, one's heart should be submitted to Allah and also the motives out of which one acts should be divine and self–centrisms and groupisms should be wiped out of one's life and one's goal and objective

should become just his perfection as well as the others' perfection. One should desire Allah's guidance for himself and for the others and in this way desire nothing but Allah's pleasure and in one word, one should submit his being totally to Allah:

"و من يسلم وجهه الى اللّه و هو محسن فقد استمسك بالعروة الوثقىٰ ..."

"And whoever submits himself wholly to Allah and he is the doer of good (to others), he indeed has taken hold of the firmest thing upon which one can lay hold ... (31:22)."

Such a man acquires the merit for acquiring the blessing of Allah's particular guidance; otherwise due to being unthankful for the blessing, the blessing will be taken away (from him) by Allah.

Providing Sustenance:

Another branch or dimension of **At–Tawḥīd** in **Rubūbiyyah** which has been greatly emphasized in the Holy Qur'ān is that the Almighty Allah is the Only One Who provides susten ance to His creatures and provides for their needs. The Holy Qur'ān says:

"يا ايها الناس اذكروا نعمت اللّه عليكم هل من خالق غير اللّه و يرزقكم من السماء و الارض لا اله الاّ هو فأنى تؤفكون"

"O' men! call to mind the favour of Allah on you; is there any creator besides Allah who gives you sustenance from the heaven and the earth? There is no god but He; whence are you then turned away ... (35:3)?"

As is observed, in the above **āyah** of the Holy Qur'ān, being the Creator and being the Giver of sustenance have been regarded as being necessarily accompanying each other. The Holy Qur'ān says: "Is there any creator besides Allah who gives you sutenance?" This contains a very delicate point. As a rule, it might seem that the question should have been put in the following way: "Is there a giver of sustenance who gives you sutenance?" However, the Holy Qur'ān puts the question in this way: "Is there any creator besides Allah who gives you sustenance?' This **āyah** of the Holy Qur'ān points out the fact that giving sustenance is one of the prestigious matters of creation; namely, means of sustenance (including food) should have been created in the world so that when a creature needs any means of sustenance, for example food, he can have access to it, use it and continue his life.

So, in reality, it can be said that the One Who has created him in need of means of sustenance and Who has put the means of sustenance, including foodstuffs within his reach, is the same One Who gives sustenance to him and in fact giving sustenance is nothing but the fact that he can use the foodstuffs which have been created and which have been put within his reach. Of course the word "**rizq**" (sustenance) is sometimes applied in a more extensive sense which also includes non–material sustenances. For instance, it is said that the sustenance for the sould is knowledge or even about the angels there is a **riwāyat** that: "و طعامهم التسبيح" "and their food is praising (Allah)". But By sustenance which is discussed here, material sustenance for the continuation of worldy and perfectional life is meant which depends on sustenance. One of men's reproachable characteristics is that as long as they fell in need and sense their hunger, thirst, and their other material needs, they stretch out their hands towards Allah, but when their needs are met, they become neglectful of Allah, particularly if they have themselves made an effort or

applied their mental and scientific capabilities (in connection with meeting the needs). In this connection, the Holy Qur'ān says:

"فاذا مس الانسان ضُرٌّ دعانا ثم اذا خولناه نعمة منا قال انّما اوتيته على علم بل هى فتنة و لكن اكثرهم لايعلمون"

"So when harm afflicts a man he calls upon Us, then, when We give him a favour from Us, he says: 'I have been given it only by means of knowledge'. Nay, it is a trial, but most of them do not know (39:49)."

The Almighty Allah showered His blessings on some of His creatures, but they imagined that these blessings have been achieved as a result of their own endeavours, cleverness, sagacity, knowledge and intelligence.

One of the distinguished examples of such persons is Qārūn (Korah, Croesus). About the wealth of Qārūn there are many stories. The Holy Qur'ān says about his wealth:

"... و آتيناه من الكنوزما ان مفاتحه لتنوأ بالعصبة اولى القوة ..."

"... And We had given him of the treasures, so much so that his hoards of wealth would certainly weigh down a company of men possessed of great strenght ... (28:76)."

The pious people admonished Qārūn and said to him:

"و ابتغ فيما اتيك اللّه الدار الاخرة و لاتنس نصيبك من الذنيا ..."

"And seek by means of what Allah has given you the future abode, and do not neglect your portion of this world ... (28:77).

The pious people advised him not to become proud of these riches, not to make them means of mischief on the earth and to try to use the bounties Allah had given him for his life in the Hereafter. But in reply to them, Qārūn said:

"... انما اوتیته علی علم عندی ..."

"... *I have been given this only on account of the knowledge I have ... (28:78).*"

So, Qārūn's response was: "Which wealth has Allah given me? I myself have endeavourd and acquired the wealth with my knowledge and industry and no one has any right in my wealth. The poor and the subdued should themselves go and get money."

Such attitude, namely, to think that what we achieve is due to our own endeavours and efforts, and that our achievements are of our own is the very polytheistic attitude and a **Muwaḥḥid** should know that his being is from Allah, his physical power, his intellectual power and all the matters in which he brings about changes are all from Allah, and still more, using the same is also depending upon Allah's planning and it is not the case that anybody who gathered a wealth and acquired some riches, will be able to use that wealth well in this world. There might be many who amassed lots of wealth (whether in a **Ḥalāl** (lawful by Islam) or in **ḥarām** (unlawful by Islam) way), but did not succeed in using this wealth. Qārūn was also rated among such persons. He could not use the immense wealth he had amassed, because Allah's torment fell upon him and both him and his wealth were swallowed up by the earth (at Allah's command). Those who desired to have Qārūn's wealth, when saw this event, became conscious of the fact that merely possessing wealth and worldly riches is not sufficient for felicity in this world.

"و اصبح الذين تمنوا مكانه بالامس، يقولون و يكأن اللّه يبسط الرزق لمن يشاء من عباده و يقدر ..."

"And those who yearned for his place only the day before began to say: 'Ah! (know) that Allah increases and straitens the means of subsistence for whom He will of His servants' ... (28:82)."

They saw that all that wealth sank in the earth and nothing of it was won by Qārūn and that even he himself perished. They said that: 'Ah! it seems that It is Allah Who increases the means of subsistence for anybody he wills and straitens it for any body He wills'. This matter, (namely, the increasing and straitening of the means of subsistence) has been clearly stipulated in over ten **āyāt** of the Holy Qur'ān, including the following **āyah**:

"الله يبسط الرزق لمن يشاء و يقدر ..."

"Allah increases and straitens the means of subsistence for whom He wills ... (13:26)."

The planning of the means of subsistence, increasing it or straitening it are all in Allah's hand.

Allah's predestination in Men's Sustenance

Of course it is not the case that Allah decreases or increases anybody's means of sustenance without expedience and wisdom, and if some persons' means of subsistence are increased or decreased, it is on the basis of Allah's wise rules and principles. The Holy Qur'ān says:

"ولو بسط اللّه الرزق لعباده لبغوا فی الارض، و لکن ینزل بقدر ما یشاء انه بعباده خبیر بصیر."

"And if Allah should amplify the provision for His servants they would certainly revolt in the earth; but He sends it down according to a measure as He pleases; surely He is Aware of, Seeing His servants (42:27)."

The Holy Qur'ān says that if Allah amplified men's means of subsistence to such an extent that there would be no need for them to endeavour and try, these men would become rebellious, so Allah sends down the means of subsistence to the extent He knows advisable and It is He Who is Aware of the situation of His creatures and knows all that is expedient for each.

Besides, the more important point is that the existence of various means of subsistence and their being less and more is one of the divine tests as the Holy Qur'ān says:

"... و رفع بعضکم فوق بعض درجات لیبلوکم فی ما اتکم ..."

"... And raised some of you above others by (various) grades, that He might try you by what He has given you ... (6:166)."

And above this, basically all the affairs of the life in this world are means for test.

"الذی خلق الموت و الحیوٰة لیبلوکم ایکم احسن عملاً"

"Who created death and life that He may try you – which of you is best in deeds (67:2)."

As for the manner of testing, we know that people are not equal in physical force and not all can perform one kind of economic activity at the same level: One has more physical power and the other less. Likewise, people's mental power and their management abilities are not the same. In the midst of all this, those who have less physical and mental power, enjoy less material shares and naturally those who have more mental, scientific and administrative powers, gain more products and willy–nilly people' means of subsistence become different. The Almighty Allah, with this difference in means of subsistence, tests the men that whether individuals are contented with their own rights or extend the hands of aggression to the rights of the others; whether the one who has lots of wealth, supposing that he has also acquired that wealth through halāl ways, fulfils his duties or whether like Qārūn he says:

"... انما اوتیته علی علم عندی ..."

"... I have been given this only on account of the knowledge I have ... (28:78)."

And, in the other case, whether he worships Allah only when he has wealth or whether even if his wealth is taken away from him, he still remembers Allah; and whether a person beseeches Allah and extends his hands of prayer, benediction and appealing to Allah just when he is empty–handed and has no wealth or whether he remembers Allah when he is rich too? Therefore, the differences between means of subsistence and people's enjoying different blessings is a general wisdom by which people are tested and tried.

Reasons for and causes of change of means of subsistence

But sometimes the cause of change of means of subsistence is the individual himself, in the way that if an individual appreciates a God–given blessing, makes good use of it and treads the path of Allah, that blessing will be increased for him:

"... لئن شكرتم لازيدنّكم ..."

"... *If you are grateful, I would certainly give to you more ... (14:7).*"

And likewise, being ungrateful for the blessings and not treating the God–given blessings in a thankful way will cause the straitening and decrease in the blessings and will be followed by Allah's torment and displeasure.

"... و لئن كفرتم ان عذابى لشديد"

"... *And if you are ungrateful, My torment is truely severe (14:7).*"

Of course, this misconception should not occur either that if anybody has more blessings, it indicates that he is fulfilling Allah's commands better, for, there are many who not only do not appreciate Allah's blessings, but who also misuse the same and attempt to obstinately oppose and fight against the truth and the true servants of Allah, as are the superpowers of the world today, and yet Allah does not take His blessings away from them, but some times even increases those blessings upon them. This is another divine **Sunnah** (tradition), called **imlā'** (giving respite) and **istidrāj** (drawing one towards a failure situation)). That is, if some people, due to their own wrong choice, follow the path of falsehood and continue to tread on it rapidly and

severely and there is no hope of their returning (to Allah's way), Allah will, through increasing the material blessings, provide the grounds for their spiritual collapse, their peace and tranquility are taken away from them and eventually eternal torment will be brought about for them. In this regard, the Holy Qur'ān says:

"و لايحسبن الذين كفروا انما نملى لهم خير لانفسهم، انّما نملى لهم ليزدادوا اثما ..."

"And let not those who disbelieve think that Our granting them respite is better for them; We grant them respite so that they increase their sins ... (3:178)."

The Holy Qur'ān warns us against imagining that when Allah gives some blessings to the disbelievers, these blessings will do good for them. According to the Holy Qur'ān, this is not at all the case and rather Allah increases the blessings for them so that they will be polluted with more sins and be afflicted with more torment both in this world and in the Hereafter.

One of the other divine traditions in planning for men is the tradition of helping. That is, if some one, of his own free will, chooses to follow the way of mischief, Allah, too, will help him to proceed further in that way and if he chooses the way of goodness, Allah, too, will help him to become better. The Holy Qur'ān says:

"كلا نمد هٰؤلاء و هٰؤلاء من عطاء ربك و ما كان عطاء ربك محظوراً"

"All do We aid –these as well as those– out of the bounty of your Lord, and the bounty of your Lord is not confined (17:20)."

According to the Holy Qur'ān, both the ones who turn into worshippers of this world's life and who turn their whole attention to the material pleasures and also those who devote themselves to the love for Allah and the truth and who tread the path of human perfections, are aided and helped by Allah. The help to the world–worshippers is that they are let more deeply drown in the world and become more neglectful of Allah and the help to the believers and the seekers of the truth is that their insight and spirituality are increased, their faith is exalted and through the fulfilment of more pious deeds, their spiritual degrees and other worldly perfections are increased.

So, Allah's giving means of subsistence to His creatures and His increasing and decreasing the same are under particular laws, regulations and principles of which some were pointed out here. However, we are not aware of the formula of many others (of these laws, regulations and principles). Briefly it can be said that Allah gives, whatever He knows expedient and His wisdom demands, to anybody anywhere. For some people expedience demands amplification of the means of subsistence and for some, straitening of the means of subsistence is demanded by expedience.

Likewise, in the Holy Qur'ān certain causes and traditions have also been expressed for straitening the means of subsistence. One of those traditions is being ungrateful for the blessings. The Holy Qur'ān says:

"و ضرب اللّه مثلاً قرية كانت آمنة مطمئنة يأتيها رزقها رغداً من كل مكان، فكفرت بانعم اللّه فأذاقها اللّه لباس الجوع و الخوف بما كانوا يصنعون."

"And Allah sets forth a parable: (Consider) a town safe and secure to which its means of subsistence come in abundance from every quarter; but it became ungrateful to Allah's

favours, therefore, Allah made it to taste the utmost degree of hunger and fear because of what they wrought (16:112)".

In the above verse of the Holy Qur'ān, Allah sets forth as a parable a people who lived in a fertile land and for whom there were plenty of blessings and besides, to whom blessings came from other places too and who lived in the utmost degree of happiness, ease and plenty, until they became ungrateful for Allah's blessings, used them in improper ways, spoiled and wasted them and in one word, did not fulfil their duties in regard to Allah's blessing. For this reason, the garb of hunger and insecurity were put on them and they tasted poverty and misery and this was the punishment for the bad deeds they had committed.

Sometimes, too, the means of subsistence are straitened (by Allah) for testing (the people). There is a man who is a believer, who obeys Allah's commands, and who is not ungrateful for Allah's blessings either, but who should be tested for his perfection, (ie, So that he will achieve perfection). Prophet Ayyūb May Allah's blessings be upon him) is one of the great and praiseworthy prophets of Allah who has a very lofty position. The Almighty Allah, for increasing his degrees, made him the object of a severe test and trial and took away from him the material blessings. But this worthy servant of Allah, in all the hardships was greatly patient and rendered forbearance and did not speak even a word of complaint and he reached (such a lofty) position that the Almighty Allah, concerning his status has made a statement which He has made about few prophets:

"... انا وجدناه صابرا نعم العبد..."

"... *surely We found him patient; most excellent the servant! ... (38:44).*"

One of the other reasons for the straitening of the means of subsistence is the people's not fulfilling their duty towards the deprived and the poor. In this connection, the Holy Qur'ān says:

"فاما الانسان اذا ما ابتلیه ربه فاکرمه و نعمه فیقول ربی اکرمن ٥ و اما اذا اما ابتلیه فقدر علیه رزقه، فیقول ربی اهانن ٥"

"And as for man, when his Lord tries him, then treats him with honour and makes him lead an easy life, he says: My Lord honours me. But when He tries him (differently), then straitens to him his means of subsistence, he says: My Lord has disgraced me (89:15-16)."

Here (in the above āyāt). it is well observed that in both cases first the "trial" has been emphasized; the "trial" sometimes has the form of an amplification of the means of subsistence and sometimes the form of straitening it. The Holy Qur'ān says that if Allah grants man the blessing of honour, makes him respected and honourable in the society and gives him lots of blessings, he says: "I am very dear to Allah for He has given so many blessings to me." But if his means of subsistence is straitened, it is here that he says: "Allah has disgraced me". But this is not true. Because both are "trial", both, that is, amplification of the means of subsistence and the straitening of the means of subsistence. But this straitening of the means of subsistence and becoming disgraced, is the punishment for the actions man has himself performed.

"کلاّ بل لاتکرمون الیتیم ٥، و لا تحاضون علی طعام المسکین ٥، و تأکلون التراث اکلالما ٥ و تحبون المال حباً جماً ٥

"Nay! but you do not honour the orphan; nor do you urge one another to feed the poor; and you eat away the heritage, devouring (everything) indiscriminately; and you love wealth with exceeding love (89:17-20)."

The Holy Qur'ān says that you did not honour the people's orphans and discriminated between them and your own children, that you did not urge one another to feed and tend to the poor. (The Holy Qur'ān does not say "and you do not feed the poor", the significance of feeding the poor, is preserved in its own place and anybody who has the ability should tend to the poor and the needy, rather above this, according to the Holy Qur'ān, you should urge one another to tend to the poor and the needy, so that through cooperation, co-thinking and urging each other, a remedy will be worked out for social poverty). The Holy Qur'ān says that with your strange attachment and love for wealth, you indiscriminately devoured the wealth inherited from your fathers and relatives and even did not give part of it to the poor, to your neighbours and to your relatives. These caused the leaf of your trial to change and your means of subsistence to be straitened.

Providing Sustenance through Uncommon Ways

The point which needs to be pointed out here is that besides granting the means of subsistence in an ordinary way and through the causes and the means, Allah is able to provide sustenance without the natural means and in an exceptional way, as was the case for Maryam (AS). The Holy Qur'ān says:

"... و كفلها زكريا كلّما دخل عليها زكّريا المحراب وجد عندها رزقاً
قال يا مريم انى لك هذا قالت هو من عند اللّه ان اللّه يرزق من يشاء

بغير حساب ٥ "

"... *And Zakariyyā took charge of her; whenever Zakariyyā called upon her at the sanctuary, he found food with her. He said: "O* **Maryam***! whence comes this to you?" She said: "It is from Allah. Surely Allah gives to whom He wills without measure (3:37)."*

Among the pious men and **'ulamā'** of this **ummah**, too, such miracles and stories exist in plenty which if collected, will form a voluminous encyclopaedia. However, Allah's wisdom demands that man be always exposed to test and that his perfection be fulfilled by the way of his own choice and selection.

If people saw their food ready and descended from heavens each day, they would feel no need and would not realize the fact that they are creatures who are totally in need. If people did not have to endeavour for achieving their means of subsistence, these sciences and industries would not develop in the world and divine wisdoms and the mysteries of Allah in creation would not be known in their light and naturally neigher material progress, nor spiritual evolution would be attained by man. If everybody's means of subsistence reached him without his taking pains and going through difficulties and if it were not necessary for him to work and engage in activities, the matter of **ḥalāl** and **ḥarām** would not be propounded in business and trade and it would not become known whether a person makes aggression upon other people's property or not? Whether in business dealings he speaks the truth or he cheats? Whether when enjoying Allah's blessings, he pays the others' rights or not and whether he helps the poor, the relatives, the kins and the needy and many other such possibilities which become known just through testing and

trial in different forms and manners.

Therefore, behind endeavouring and being tested, there are certain wisdoms which if did not exist, the way of so many perfections would remain closed to man.

Divine Wisdom

At the conclusion of this section, namely, the section on the clarification of **At-Tawhīd** in the ideological system (of Islam), we pay to the discourse that all divine plannings are wise. of course, great divine scholars have discussed this matter in detail and written many books, but here we just content ourselves with a simple expression.

When we know Allah and come to believe that firstly: Allah is aware of every thing and his infinite knowledge encompasses all the past, present and future events; secondly: Allah is able to create any creature the way He wants to; thirdly: Allah loves good and perfection and since good and perfection are rays of the perfection of His Being and are desired and loved by Him, He creates His creatures with great goodness and perfection; fourthly: Allah does not envy His creatures and in other words, when we believe in Allah's knowledge, power, good-will and His being not envious, we conclude that the world has been created in the best condition of goodness, perfection and expedience and it is planned in the most possible suitable manner.

The Holy Qur'ān, too, explicitly points out this matter and says:

"الذی احسن کل شیٍ خلقه ..."

"Who made good everything that He has created ... (32:7)."

At another place the Holy Qur'ān says:

"... صنع اللّه الذى اتقن كل شيء، انه خبير بما تفعلون ٥ "

"... *The handiwork of Allah Who has made every thing thoroughly; surely He is Aware of what you do (27:88).*"

Allah's handiwork is such that He has created every thing in a firm and concrete form and in the best manner and without vacuum. He has placed in creatures every thing that wisdom demands and has not rendered any stinginess and parsimony.

In the face of this general principle, namely, the divine wisdom and the fact that the planning of the world and of man is in the best way, naturally, some questions may occur to individuals as to which wisdom is involved in each particular case?, though it is an undue expectation and man does not have the ability to understand and realize all secrets and wisdoms:

"... و ما اوتيتم من العلم الاّ قليلاً ٥ "

" ... *And you are not given aught of knowledge but a little. (17:85).*"

However, Allah has generally expressed certain principles in the Holy Qur'ān and on the basis of those general principles we can, with the guidance of **wahy** interpret many of the phenomena and discover, to the extent of our ability, the wisdoms behind them. But a faithful person, should both on the basis of logical reason and also on the basis of the verses of the Holy Qur'ān, possesses this confidence that whatever happens, in any place it happens and in any form it happens, it is the demand of the wisdom of creation and that were it other than this, it would be against (divine) wisdom.

The Wisdom Behind Bearing Difficulties by Man

One of the most important principles behind men's bearing difficulties and hardships is the blossoming of the talents and the actualization of their hidden potentialities, so that whereby they attain their worthy perfection. For instance, just as physical growth and physical power come into being in the light of severe exercises (by the individual), and the one who wishes to have more physical power should do more and harder exercises, so also the growth of spiritual perfections is acquired through entering the field of difficulties and hardships and bearing them, and by this means man's God-given talents turn into reality. In the language of the Holy Qur'ān, providing the grounds for spiritual practices is called "testing", "ibtilā", "imtaḥān", "fitnā" and similar expressions which have been pointed out in the Holy Qur'ān are viewing these very events which occur for men due to the divine planning and predestination.

In fact, what in the language of the Holy Qur'ān is called "test" is also raising and in this respect, we can call the world a place of raising besides a place of testing, because man's talents are raised in the world and in the world his potential abilities are actualized. In **riwāyāt,** it has been said that the Almighty Allah tests the **Mu'min** (the faithful person) by means of hadrships and difficulties, as a mother raises her child by suckling it. However, the Holy Qur'ān, among the above meanings, has pointed out another fact in connection with these divine tests and that fact is that if a person passes his test well and is properly raised in this place of raising and gets good marks, besides achieving certain levels of spiritual perfection and growth, he becomes a model for the others too and attains the position of men's leadership and **imāmah**. So, one of the goals behind tests which is the very existence of hardships and difficulties is that among men, individuals emerge who will be

examples for the others (to follow).

Such divine goals behind putting forth hardships and testing men, are depictable in three forms: one, a distinguished person grows in the society and attains high positions and the others follow him. This, being model and parable, has many levels, its higher level being the level of the exalted prophets (AS) and the Infallibe Imams (AS), the very level which the Almighty Allah has granted to prophet Ibrāhīm (Abraham) (AS). In the following **āyah** which we have repeatedly heard,

"و اذ ابتلى ابراهيم ربه بكلمات فاتمهن قال انى جاعلك للناس اماماً ..."

"*And when* **Ibrāhīm's** *Lord tried him with (certain) words, he fulfilled them. He said: "Surely I will make you an* **Imām** *(religious leader) (2:124).* "

The Almighty Allah, after (granting) the position of **Nubuwwah**, risālah (being a Messenger of Allah) and **Khullat** (being a friend of Allah) (all of which were wonderful positions the Almighty Allah had granted to **hadrat Ibrāhīm** (AS)), when willing to grant a higher Position to Ibrāhim (AS) tested him. Thus, Ibrāhīm (AS) was first afflicted with the fire of the men of **Namrūd** (Nimrod). This was one stage of the test after successfully passing which he achieved the needed readiness for accepting the position of Imāmah.

In **rawāyāt** it has been said that when **Ibrāhīm** (AS) was put in fire, Jibrā'īl (the archangel Gabriel) came to him and said:

"الك حاجة"

"*Do you want any help?-*"

Ibrāhīm (AS) said: "I do need help. I am totally in need. Every creature, every being is nothing but in want and in need. But "امّا الیک فلا" "but not from you[12]". This was the first test for Ibrāhīm (AS) that whether he, under such hard conditions would extend his hands for want to even Jibrā'īl (AS) or not?

In another stage of the test, Ibrāhīm (AS) was asked (by Allah) to take his wife (Hājar (AS)) and his beloved child (Ismā'īl) (AS)) in a dry wilderness, in the Ḥijaz deserts in Makkah. As per Allah's command, Ibrāhīm (AS) made his family migrate to this land, left them there, and tolerated the pains of separation for the sake of the pleasure of the Almighty Allah.

The third test, which was at the same time, the hardest of them too, was the test to which Ibrāhīm (AS) was put at old age (at the time when his physical capability was reduced, the Almighty Allah granted a son, named, Ismā'īl to him and naturally he enjoyed seeing such a son and having companionship and association with him.). Ibrāhīm (AS) was commanded (by Allah) to cut off with his own hands the head of his young son (Ismā'īl (AS)) who was then at the peak of fruitfulness, handsomeness, perfection and worthiness. This is a very hard and a very great test. But without any hesitation, Ibrāhīm (AS) told his son that he had such a command. Ismā'īl (AS), too, responded:

" .. یا ابت افعل ما تؤمر ستجدنی ان شاء اللّه من الصابرین ° "

"... O my father! do what you are commanded; if Allah wills, you will find me of the patient ones (37:102)."

It is here that such a person who has tolerated hardships and offered all he had in the way of Allah should become an Imam and model for the others.

Likewise, some of the other great prophets (AS), after bearing certain hardships attained the position of **Imāmah** who have been briefly referred to in the following **āyah** of the Holy Qur'ān:

"و جعلنا منهم ائمة يهدون بامرنا لمّا صبروا..."

"And We made of them Imams to guide by Our command when they were patient ... (32:24)."

Also sometimes a group of the society becomes a model for other groups. If in the society, a people adorned with goodness, moral soundness and piety voluntarily embrace hardships and difficulties, dispense with comfort, ease and welfare of life and direct their efforts towards serving Allah's creatures; such group of the society acquires the position of leadership and becomes an example and model for the others.

However, above all this is that when an **Ummah** (Islamic people) becomes a model for the other peoples; if a people collectively achieve its goodness and successfully passes its test, the whole of this people becomes a pattern for the other peoples and just as it has been ordained by Divine will that among each **Ummah** (people), a distinguished individual, the distinguished individuals, or a distinguished group undertakes the leadership of the others, so also it has been ordained by the Divine Will that among all human societies, a society be realized which will be a model for all human societies. This (Divine) Will, at the present age, has ordained that our Islamic **Ummah,** should rise up in this land (in the Islamic Republic of Iran), pass the tests one after the other, pass the tests of Khurdād 15, 1342 SH (Solar Hijrah) (June 5, 1963 AD), the test of Bahman 22, 1357 SH (February 11, 1979 AD), of the war, of the economic siege, the back-breaking tragical events, problems and

hardships successfully and honourably and with hands overflowing with matchless self-sacrifice, epic and resistance[13], attain the position of leadership, and being pattern and model for other nations and peoples.

The other wisdom behind the existence of hardships and troubles is that man comes to notice the fact that the worldly life is not an ideal life and that man's innate ideal which is eternal perfection and felicity is not possible in this world. Man's eyes, due to weakness of recognition, particularly in the primary stages of life and before being trained by Allah's prophets (AS) and Allah's awliyā' (AS) are fixed at material pleasures and worldly enjoyments and that which he primarily understands and recognizes are these very pleasures of this world's life and he knows no other thing; whereas, if this world's life was totally for pleasures and comforts, it would cause man to go astray. So, on the basis of Allah's wisdom, there should be hardships in this world to warn man that what he truely demands and what his inborn nature desires, namely, 'eternal felicity' is not possible in this world. Therefore, the existence of disasters and problems in this world's life is for man to take lesson, for him not to become infatuated with this world, not to be entrapped by its pleasures and luxuries and to know that this life is a means for testing, that here is a bridge for passing and a passage which should be passed by and left for the eternal felicity.

Another fact of wisdom pointed out in the Holy Qur'ān is the fact that when man is engaged in enjoyment and comfort and all that he wants is provided for him, he does not notice his weakness and needfulness and consequently the seeds of rebellion and disobedience (towards Allah's Commands) grow in his soul, leading him towards selfishness and egoism and he gradually forgets Allah.

"... ان الانسان ليطغىٰ ۝ ان رٰاه استغنىٰ ۝ "

"... Man is most surely inordinate; because he sees himself free from want (96:6-7)."

Therefore, Allah must, on the basis of His supreme wisdom, make men realize their needfulness in various conditions and with various methods and make them notice the fact that they are thoroughly in need so that by this means their hearts turn to Allah. This general rule has been expressed by the Almighty Allah in two verses of the Holy Qur'ān, saying that He has sent no prophets to any people, but first having afflicted that people with hardships and troubles, so that the grounds for paying attention towards Allah and the state of modesty, humbleness and entreaty (towards Allah) occurs for them.

"و لقد ارسلنا الى امم من قبلك فاخذنٰهم بالبٰاسآء و الضراء لعلهم يتضرعون ۝ "

"And certainly We sent (messengers) to nations before you, then We seized them with distress and affliction in order that they might humble themselves (6:42)."

In another verse, Allah, with a more explicit and decisive tone, says:

و ما ارسلنا فى قرية من نبى الاّ اخذنا اهلها بالبأساء والضراء لعلهم يضرعون ۝ "

"And We did not send a prophet in a town but We overtook its people with distress and affliction in order that they might humble themselves (7:94)."

In the former **āyah** (6:42), it is said (by Allah) that "و لقد ارسلنا" (and certainly We sent), but in the latter **āyah** (7:94), Allah in a language which points to a particular case says that: "And We did not send a prophet in a town but We overtook its people with distress and afflictions ... ." So, another divine wisdom behind the existence of disasters and problems in life is that man gets the state of humbling himself (before Allah) and beseeching (to Him) and feeling of being in need and does not become proud of the blessings Allah has put at his disposal, does not think that they belong to himself, that he himself has acquired them and that whenever he wishes, the blessings will be provided for him with his own efforts, and that man knows that this is not the case, that Allah's planning is above these plannings and that sometimes in spite of all his efforts and endeavours, he still becomes afflicted with hardship.

One of the other of these wisdoms is the understanding (by man) of the significance of the blessings, for, if all blessings are provided for man and his needs are met, he becomes neglectful and fails to understand their significance. A simple example serves well to clarify this matter: All of us use the air and know that the greatest needs of life for each living being are air and water. If the oxygen of the air does not reach us, our life will be endangered in a few seconds. But how many times, have each of us in our life-time said to Allah: "O Allah, thanks to You for having created the air". Few are those who notice the fact that the air too is a great blessing, because it is and has always been at our disposal. So that people would know the value of His blessings and endeavour to be thankful, whereby attaining perfection and providing the ground for their being endowed with the ever-lasting eternal blessings, Allah sometimes brings about certain vacillations in the existence of the blessings, by way of creation (such as destitutions - disasters and problems) and by way of **Sharī'ah** (Islamic laws[14]) (Such as performing

sawm), so that when faced with shortage, people would realize that this blessing is valuable and that what would happen if that blessing did not exist. Some times it may occur to the mind of some unaware individuals that what would it matter if Allah arranged men's lives in such a way that no poor and oppressed person would be found in the world and the people would live in pleasure and joy without making efforts, pains-taking and enduring the suffering? It should be said that this is one of Allah's wisdoms in His planning for men, so that by this means, people would understand the various blessings and become conscious of their significance. In a **riwāyah** it has been said that Jibrā'īl (AS) came to the Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam and after conveying Allah's salutations to him said: "O the prophet (SA) of Allah, the Almighty Allah has sent a message to you that if you want, He will put all the treasures on earth at your disposal. (of course the expression of such **riwāyah** is for our education and understanding the significance of the matter, otherwise Allah is aware of the heart (the inner desires) of His Prophet (SA). The Holy prophet (SA) of Islam replied: "I beseech Allah to feed me one day so that I will fulfil the thanks-giving to His blessings and to keep me hungry one day so that I will well understand my needfulness, destitution and poverty towards the Almighty Allah.[15]" This is a great lesson of **AT-Tawḥīd** and wisdom as to why there should occur hardships in man's life.

One of the very significant (divine) rules in planning for men is that man acquires the merit and capability for understanding and attaining divine invisible aids when he bears certain hardships and tolerates pressures. We, in the world of nature know a series of causes and effects, for instance, when our physical condition becomes ready to use foodstuffs and to assimilate them. If one eats food while he is satiated, this food not only does not benefit him, but also afflicts him with various diseases and also spoils the food previously

taken (by him) to, because his body is not in a ondition to assimilate the food. But if one's stomach becomes empty and one feels hungry, then the body uses the food one eats and assimilates it. The same is also true of man's spiritual condition and man becomes fit to benefit from the divine invisible (hidden) aids and the supernatural blessings when a feeling of need and vacuum come into existence in his spirit and cuts his attention off from the causes and so long as one's attention is not cut off from the natural causes and worldly causes, he will not conceive the divine occult blessing. This is a very significant point which has been emphasized in many **āyāt** and even in our day-to-day life we need to notice this point, so that we can analyze the events (both the events related to the individual life and those related to the social area.) and strengthen our faith concerning divine wisdom.

In the wars of the "Early Islam", sometimes, people's attention, due to weakness of recognition and weakness of faith, was drawn to external causes and they said: "Thanks to Allah, every thing is provided for us and there will not be any defeat for us any longer". But at that very time, in spite of the existence of ordinary causes and conditions, they still suffered a defeat and the divine aids no longer came to their help.

" ... و يوم حنين اذ اعجبتكم كثرتكم، فلم تغن عنكم شيئاً ... ٥ "

"... *And on the day of Ḥunayn, when your great numbers made you vain, but they availed you nothing ... (9:25).*"

One of such battles was the Battle of Hunayn. In the beginning of the battle, the Muslims, due to the excess of power and war equipment, said in their hearts: "We certainly will become victorious in this war, but due to their paying attention to and relying upon external causes, they suffered defeat. But

in the Battle of Badr, because they felt themselves weak and humble, and beseeched to Allah, though they were not at all ready for fighting, yet Allah helped them and rushed to their aid:

"و لقد نصركم اللّه ببدر و انتم اذلة ..."

"And Allah did certainly assist you at Badr when you were weak ... (3:123)."

So, this is a general rule that so long as the faithful men's attention is towards the natural causes, they will not be embraced by Allah's favours and that this divine grace will include them when they cut themselves off all things, turn their attention solely to Allah and give up relying on material causes. Hardships, problems, disasters and discomforts are most effective in paving the ground for the realization of this condition, namely, cutting man's attention off towards any thing other than Allah.

Divine Qaḍā' (Destiny) and Qadar (Decree)

Besides these general divine plannings which are, to a large extent, understandable for the people, the particular plannings are also not independent of Allah. In the Holy Qur'ān it has been said that all that occurs in the world is by Allah's will and no phenomenon, in any place, is realized without Allah's will, including man's death:

"و ما كان لنفس ان تموت الاّ باذن اللّه كتاباً مؤجلا ..."

"No soul will ever die but with the permission of Allah, at (the end of) an appointed term ... (3:145)."

Each man has a fixed appointed time (for life) and a decreed fate which the Almighty Allah has determined and his death comes when Allah's wise destination demands it. In other words, no man dies without Allah's permission and no man dies outside the time appointed by Allah and ordained in the book of his fate which has been determined by the Almighty Allah, be his death a natural death or an unnatural one, be it in the way of the truth or in the way of falsehood.

This is one of the matters which has a very constructive role in men's life. Of course, if Islamic learnings are taught properly, but however deviational expression are set forth in these fields, from the best and loftiest learnings, wrong and undesirable results will be derived and this is one of the jobs in which the **Shayāṭīn** and the satanic men have invariably indulged themselves.

One of those matters which has been the object of incorrect interpretations is this very matter of predestination and men's fate. Some have thought that the Almighty Allah has predestined a fate for each man means that man's free choice is totally not allowed towards fate and that what happens to man is outside the domain of his will-power and free-choice and that he himself can play no role in it. (This is that very Fatalistic inclination which has prevailed in some of the Islamic philosophical schools and still the remnants of such thoughts are more or less existing in many of the Islamic countries and among the Muslim nations), whereas, the predestination and fate of man do not mean negating his free choice, his being answerable and responsible. In the system of creation, we have a discussion on creation and the real courses of the world, as to what has occurred, what is occurring and what will ocur in the world and there is also another part which concers divine legislation and men's duties, what they should do and what is their responsibility towards them and that what effects the actions that they fulfil

out of their own free will, will have on their lives in this world and in the Hereafter.

Correct Clarification of the Meaning of Divine Qaḍā and Qadar

Unfortunately, the mixing up of these two subjects have brought about undesirable results, so much so that it has not only had no positive and constructive role on some people, but negative effects have also resulted from them. Here, we do not have the time to pay to philosophical discussion and the technical doubts in this connection and their expression and solution, and/or to survey the matter historically, ie, to survey when and by what factors these inclinations prevailed and what effects resulted from them. However, we can briefly say that at the time of the usurping rules when the spirit of Islam and the Islamic goals were at the utmost degree of their state of being disregarded, some of these deviated ideas, including Fatalism, were projected for political private motives. The Banū Umayyah (Umayyad) rulers, for making the people obey and follow them, encouraged some persons to spread such thoughts among the people that whatever happens, since Allah has willed, all should accept it and offer no resistance against it. In this connection, there are many examples. Ibn 'Abbās (one of the **Ṣaḥābah** (companions of the Holy prophet (SA) of Islam) says: "During a journey in which, we were going on a war, along with the second Caliph, the Caliph summoned me and said: "Do you know why your cousin (meaning 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib (AS) did not take part in this war?" I replied: "I do not know." He said: "He stayed in Madīnah to prepare the ground for his own **khilāfah** (succession) after me, so that he would become **khalīfah** (successor of prophet Muhammad (SA)) after me." I said: "My cousin believes that he has

no need for preparing such ground, because Allah's prophet had appointed him for **Khilāfah**." The Second Caliph said: "Yes! the Prophet wanted to do this! but Allah did not will it.[16]" This saying, in any way interpreted, according to what has been narrated, is a sign of a narrow-mindedness concerning Islamic learnings. It is clear that what occurs in the world is subject to the divine creational will. But this does not mean that it is also subjcect to the divine legislative will. The Almighty Allah, with His creational will has paid attention to all events, so that nothing happens without His creational will. The rise of **Sayyidush-Shuhadā'** Al-Imam Al-Ḥusayn (AS) and his becoming martyred, are in accordance with the divine creational will, but this does not mean (divine) permission for his killing and the negation of responsibility from those who took part in his martyrdom. Likewise, those who, after the demise of the Holy prophet (SA) of Islam sat on the seat of caliphate over Muslims and who also later turned the Islamic **khilāfah** into the form of Umayyad and Abbasid monarchy, acted as per Allah's creational will, but from the viewpoint of His legislative will, namely legitimately by no means they were permitted to commit such an act and they did not have the right to usurpingly deprive Islam and the Muslims from their indisputable right. Therefore, it should be noticed that men are responsible for what takes place as per the divine creational will, whether in connection with the individual issues and/or in connection with the social affairs and will see their worldy and otherworldly effects.

This was a reference to a very precise subject which should be pursued in scientific circles. However, to see how man, while being possessed of free will and performing his works with free will and free choice, is under the divine planning, we will give a simple example:

'Consider two persons who come out of their homes in the morning; one

aiming to go to the bakery to buy bread and the other to board a bus and go to his work, but at a road crossing they come across each other, discuss a matter with each other and take a decision for an action. For example, they decide to go to the warfront (to fight against the aggressors) or to rush to the help of homeless flood-stricken people or to fulfil another good deed and/or God-forbid, commit a sinful act. It is obvious that these two persons came out of their homes with their own free will and decided to fulfil some acts with their own free choice. But this is not inconsistent with the belief that Allah arranges the matters in such a way that a ground be made so that the persons think of going to the war-fronts out of free will. But if these two events did not occur simultaneously and one of the two persons came out of the house when the other person had already boarded the bus and left (for his work) and/or **vice versa**, these two persons would not meet each other and would not decide to go to the war-front together. This is an example of predestination. You see, Allah has arranged the events in such a way that good and wise consequences will result from them which will bring about perfection for Allah's creatures and open a way towards their salvation.'

Here, we quote another example which is about prophet Mūsā (Moses) (AS) from the Holy Qur'ān, When Mūsā (AS) reached maturity under the care of Fir'awn (Pharaoh) and killed a Coptic (Egyptian) man, a person guided him, saying that he should leave the place, because the men of Fir'awn were attempting a plot on his (Mūsā's) life. Mūsā (AS), too, took his advice, left Egypt and went towards Madyan.

After going through a long way, he reached the vicinity of Madyan. There the people had gathered over a well and were drawing water out of it to water their sheep. Mūsā (AS), tired and hungry, had sat down on a corner to get over his fatigue when suddenly his eyes fell on two chaste girls who were

standing in a corner and keeping their sheep there. Mūsā (AS) got up, went to them and asked: "Why do you not water your sheep?" They replied: "We have an aged father who is staying at home and who is unable to fulfil the pastoral deeds. So, we have to bring the sheep here ourselves, so that after the shepherds water their sheep, we will water our sheep and/or somebody will help us and draw a bucket of water out of the well and we water our sheep. We cannot do it on our own, Mūsā (AS) came forward, took the bucket and watered the sheep ... and, the story continues, as we know, from Sūrah 28 of the Holy Qur'ān, so far as prophet Shu'ayb (Jethro) (AS) married one of his daughters to Mūsā (AS) and Mūsā (AS) spent ten years in Madyan serving as shepherd for Shu'ayb (AS).

All these events which constitute a system of miscellaneous phenomena, are the actions which certain persons, out of their own free will have fulfilled out of particular motives and for specified goals. Mūsā (AS) did not leave Egypt aiming to come to Prophet Shu'ayb (AS). He wanted to be saved from the mischief of Fir'awn and probably he apparently did not know that Shu'ayb (AS) was there, and that he had a daughter and that in that city he was the prophet. But Allah had predestined that on one hand, Mūsā (AS) comes to the service of a great prophet (AS) as prophet Shu'ayb (AS), who was in old-age and lacking ability to work, and fulfils his works and on the other, (He had) predestined that Shu'ayb (AS)'s daughter marries Mūsā (AS) and that after ten years, when Mūsā (AS) was appointed a prophet (by Allah), they return to Egypt and call upon Fir'awn to worship the One God- Allah - The One and Only. These were all Allah's predestinations. However, did in any place in these predestinations any compulsion exist Mūsā (AS), Shu'ayb (AS) or his daughter? No! The actions were all out of free-choice. Yet, there is a wise arrangement and plan over all these plannings and that is Allah's

planning. It is here that Allah says: O Mūsā! You came here on the basis of an exact deliberation and precise plan and these events should have happened so that in this safe valley you will receive the divine prophetic mission and go to Fir'awn. Those (events) were preliminaries for this task, but in no stage did they cause any compulsion over Mūsā (AS) or the others.

If one carefully thinks about the events in his daily life, he will see that in each phenomenon, there are thousands of preliminaries which the Almighty Allah has provided with His planning device and that we are neglectful of the fact that what wise planning rules over each and every one of the events of the world. One of the great men of religion (may Allah be please with him) said: "If a man thinks about the secrets of his life and if he has (inwardly) clear-sighted eyes and a conscious heart, he will see as if the whole world has been created for him and that all things are preliminaries for him so that his affairs will be performed in a perfect way. likewise, if another man thinks in this way, he will reach the same result. In a **ḥadithun-qudsiyy** (a ḥadīth which relates a revelation from Allah in the language of the prophet (SA)) the Almighty Allah says: "I treat each one of the offsprings of Adam so kindly and compassionately as if I had just that very creature, but My creatures treat Me as if every body but Me were their God." This is a complaint from Allah in this **ḥadīthun-qudsiyy** and so, each creature should know that he is constantly under the planning and supervision of Allah and that what Allah ordains for him is good and that what He ordains as duty for him and the responsibility Allah ordains for him is good. Therefore, we should know that the divine pre-destinations are all to our advantage, even if they are from disasters and hardships and apparently to our disadvantage.

If a child falls sick in a home and his affectionate mother prevents him from eating some kinds of food and/or even for his rapid recovery makes him

take bitter medicines and takes him for injections, she is certainly meaning good for him and these actions (of the mother) are the very signs of her kindness and affection, thought the child might be displeased with this behaviour of the mother and accuse her of mercilessness. Therefore, the existence of bitter and annoying events (including floods and earthquakes) is not aimless and is under the wise planning of Allah, though the actions are fulfilled as per the individuals' free choice, too, and that the sinners are also responsible for their indecent actions. The Holy Qur'ān says:

"ما اصاب من مصيبة فی الارض و لا فی انفسكم اّلا فی كتاب من قبل ان نبرأها ان ذلك علی اللّه يسير ۝ لكيلا تاسوا علی مافاتكم و لاتفرحوا بما اتيكم واللّه لايحب كل مختال فخور ۝ "

"No evil befalls on the earth nor in your own souls, but it is in a book before We bring it into existence; surely that is easy to Allah; So that you may not grieve for what has escaped you, nor be exultant at what He has given you; and Allah does not love any arrogant boaster (57: 22-23)."

No disaster befalls any body unless it has been written in a book before and this (as every thing else) is easy for Allah to do. Then, immediately Allah expresses the reason for this: so that you believe in Allah's wise planning and not be worried if any thing is lost by you; if you lose any property, if a house is ruined, if a dear one is martyred and know that this is divine pre-destination. And on the other hand, so that you do not become proud and arrogantly gay either when the joys turn to you, and that you will always notice the fact that you are dutiful and responsible in the face of each and every event, whether pleasant or unpleasant and that you should only be

thinking of fulfilling your duties.

The Imam of the Ummah (Imam Khumaynī (QS)) has, from the very years of 1341 SH and 1342 SH (Solar Hijrah) (1962 and 1963 AD) repeatedly said: "We aim at the fulfilment of our duties and do not mind what happens. If we fight, it is not known to us that we will be one hundred per cent victorious. But when our duty is to fight, we fight, even though we apparently suffer a defeat." In some of the battles of the Early Islam, such as the Battle of Uhud, too, Muslims suffered defeat, but because they fought for the fulfilment of their duty and the exaltation of the word of AT-Tawḥīd in the world, they were always satisfied and their faith in the leadership of the Holy prophet (SA) of Islam never decreased either. They said:

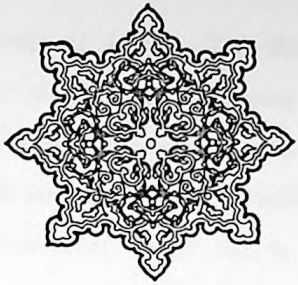
"قل لن یصیبنا الاّ ما کتب اللّه لنا هو مولانا و علی اللّه فلیتوکل المؤمنون"

"Say: 'Nothing will afflict us except what Allah has ordained for us; He is our patron; and on Allah Let the believers rely (9:51)."

The logic of these believers was that what Allah has predestined for us will happen and that we are contented with His predestination, though they might be unpleasant. Many of the events are not pleasing for us and hurt our sentiments, but we must know that Allah's wise planning is above these and that, as a whole, these phenomena will be useful for the progress of Islam and the fulfilment of the Islamic movement. Therefore, we should fulfil our own duties and seek the true goodness which is achieved just in the light of the fulfilment of our religious duties. As for what happens, it does not concern us. The universe has a Creator and a Planner Who has left no body to himself,

He knows what should happen and what is expedient.

The phenomena of this world are from one aspect a combination of good and evil, pleasant and unpleasant. Sometimes there is good health and sometimes there is illness; in one year there are security and comfort and in the other year insecurity and suffering, but none are absolute good and evil. True good and evil depend on how man faces that phenomenon. All of us regard health to be good. But if one abuses good health and falls into committing sin is good health still to his good? Would it not be closer to his good and felicity if he were ill and could not commit that sin? Property, wealth and welfare are not always good for man either, and it depends on how man treats them. Of course, from the view point that Allah has created all, all are good, but their being good and evil for you and I depend on the manner in which we treat them. The Almighty Allah, plans the world affairs such that men can derive various benefits from these double-faced phenomena and stand by the promise they have made with Allah that they will help His religion to the last drop of their blood, so that they will attain both the glory, honour and victory of this world and the eternal felicity and mercy.



PART 2

At-Tawhid in the Ideological System of Islam

In The Name of Allah - The Beneficent, The Merciful

The second part of this subject concerns **At-Tawhīd** in the value system of Islam. The terms "value", "value system" and other words of this kind are quite prevalent in today's terminology and people have become familiar with these terms. But since this term "value" has in fact been translated from other languages and has gone into our culture and is not from the viewpoint of concept and contents in conformity with the interpretations and words which have appeared in the genuine culture of Islam and the **riwāyāt**, so it is necessary to first give an explanation about this term giving extensive meaning which is today meant by it, so that we are able to see what equivalent of this term is in the Islamic culture.

The concept of value

The common and general concept which we have about the term "value" is in fact the economic concept. The relation of a commodity and/or a service with the thing man is ready to pay for getting that commodity or service, brings into existence the concept of value. But the meaning of value and the value system is other than this economic concept, though it is not totally alien to this concept and though it might very probably have at first been borrowed from this very economic concept. The justification which can be made is that we are ready to pay some money for a good and/or a service or to deliver another good or service in return for that when that good and/or service are desired and liked by us and we have a liking for them. A hungry man needs food. Food is desirable for him and he is ready to pay some money in return, which satisfies his need. So, the criterion for economic value too, is in fact desirability and being demanded. Hence we can abstract this meaning from its economic specifications and say: "any thing which is desired and demanded by

man and which can meet his need or his want, that thing is of value". The term "value", in this extensive meaning is both applied to objects as well as to men and their conduct. But since our discussion is about man and his behaviour, we have to continue speaking in this connection. Now let us see which man is more valuable from the viewpoint of Islam.

Man's Honour

In spite of what is propounded in today's world culture and which is also claimed by the humanists that each man, due to his being a human, has a natural value and in other words has honour, even though he might commit many murders and crimes, Islam considers two kinds of honour for man.

The first kind is general honour, meaning that each man, due to his being a man (irrespective of his conducts and attitudes) enjoys that honour. This is a creational honour and a God-given value which the Almighty Allah has bestowed upon man and which He has not bestowed upon the other creatures and perhaps the axis of these God-given blessings is man's intellect. In some of the āyāt of the Holy Qur'ān, too, this creational honour has been pointed out:

"ولقد كرمنا بنى آدم و حملناهم فى البر و البحر، و رزقناهم من الطيبات و فضلناهم على كثير ممن خلقنا تفضيلاً ٥ "

"And surely We have honoured the children of Adam, and We carry them in the land and the sea, and We have given them of the good things, and We have made them to excel by an appropriate excellence over most of those whom We have created (17:70)."

In the above āyah of the Holy Qur'ān, it has been stipulated that Allah has

bestowed an honour to the children of Ādam (AS) and excelled them to many of His creatures. This honouring includes all men, namely, both man and woman, little and mature possess the human creational specifications. Allah has given them eyes, ears and the other limbs and parts (of the body), a beautiful and erect body, and has also bestowed upon them mind, intellect, intelligence, talents and the other spiritual and physical characteristics which every man enjoys.

But when we meditate, we will see that this honour and value in reality belong to Allah and that It is He Who has bestowed these blessings on men freely and that men have themselves no role in attaining this honour.

The other kind of honour is that which man himself with free will and the power of free choice and free selection which the Almighty Allah has granted him achieves and attains. In this kind of honour, not all men are equal and it is enjoyed just by the virtuous and if some men act unvirtuously, they will not only have any share of this honour, but rather they will get anit-value and fall so down that they will become lower than any animal. About this group of men who have not acquired any honour for themselves the Holy Qur'ān says:

"... اولئك كالانعام بل هم اضل اولئك هم الغافلون ٥"

"... *They are as cattle, nay, they are in worse errors; these are the heedless ones (7:179).*"

Hence, that creational honour does not suffice for man to become recongnized as an honourable and noble creature for ever, because he may lose the God-given honour and buy for himself anti-honour, namely, meanness and lowness. The expression of the Holy Qur'ān in this regard is such:

"لقد خلقنا الانسان فی احسن تقویم ثم رددناه اسفل سافلین"

"Certainly We created man in the best make. Then We render him the lowest of the low (95:4-5)."

Allah has created man in the best and most admirable form and fulfilled His creational honouring in the best manner, but some men are found who deprive themselves from this divine honour and who degrade themselves down to the lowest stages which is possible for a human being. Therefore, although all men have the creational and God-given honour in common, but in the stage of free choice all are not the same and equal and will have different degrees of value and honour in proportion to the difference in their degrees of virtuousness and even sometimes some may degrade themselves so much that no honour is viewed for them and they should be omitted from the society like cancerous glands.

Moral Value

The other matter which concerns this subject is men's conduct which generally constitutes the main axis of our discussion in this series of matters. Here, starts the display of arts among the philosophers of law, the philosophers of ethics and the various thinkers of humanity. However, during tens of centuries in which they have discussed about these subjects, still their thought has not reached any decisive and correct result. A short introduction will serve to open the way towards this discussion, paying attention to which helps us in attaining this objective.

Basically, any free action fulfilled by a free agent is for the sake of attaining the result which is derived from that action and very often it might be that no action would take place if no goal was in view. Therefore, since

every action is a means for a goal, and no action is in itself desirable by nature, the value and desirability of every action is also subject to the result which is derived from that action. The person who intends to go on a trip, takes a series of actions, for instance, he buys tickets, prepares the means and necessities for the trip and gets ready for boarding the bus or an aeroplane. But by fulfilling these preliminary actions he certainly means to reach the goal, the destination and the place he has in view, and does not mean the mere fulfilment of these actions.

Here, there is a very delicate point of which many of those involved in discussion and reasoning are neglectful and it is that some times some results are derived from one's actions which either he does not know and/or does not notice, or for which he has not fulfilled that action. For instance, when one leaves home to go to visit his friend or to go to school or to perform some other action, if en route, other results follow this action of his which (results) he has not considered at all, nor he has meant them, it cannot be said that he has fulfilled this action for that result (which he had not meant). So, the value of man's free action is subject to the result which he has meant from the beginning and which he has put as his goal.

Another example will serve to better clarify this matter; a person builds a hospital for showing off and so that the people will applaud him and his only goal in spending money and time is gaining fame and popularity among the people. Now if this hospital is built and thousands of people, including the esteemed Islamic combatants and the fighters in the way of Allah are treated in that hospital, and good result is derived from this action, can it be said that the builder of the hospital (the person referred to) will also derive a benefit from this action? Certainly not! Because his aim has not been the realization of these results and only the love for fame has driven him to perform such an

action. On the contrary, if a person builds a hospital with the intention that Allah's creatures and the wounded and the oppressed people of the society use it, but a bomb happens to hit and destroy that hospital and so the building of the hospital would not lead to any result, his action has by no means become valueless, because he had indeed built the hospital for an invaluable goal. Of course if that hospital remained safe and the aims of construction were also fulfilled, he would achieve more benefits.

The Criterion for Moral Value

Now, taking into consideration the above introductions which clarify that besides the result's being taken into consideration, intention and viewing the aim have also direct bearing on giving value to man's actions, the question is raised as to what behaviour men should have and what goal they should take into consideration so that their actions, conducts and behaviours become valuable? Before paying attention to this matter, we should first see what is basically the truth and criterion for values from the viewpoint of Islam?

As a whole, the truth and criterion for values from the viewpoint of Islam and the value system of this school (the school of Islam) is that perfection which emerges in man's soul and which leads man towards worshipping Allah, getting near to Him and winning His favour. This perfection is not a conventional concept and is like physical power, a reality and a fact. Of course this perfection is to be achieved as a result of the free actions of men themselves so it will become possessed of moral value and the man possessing perfection attains true honour and real nobility.

Therefore, from the viewpoint of Islam, only the acquired spiritual perfections are the source of the exalted and positive human value, otherwise physical and body perfections have no genuine value and even the God-given

powers of the soul cannot by themselves be the source of value either. Extraordinary intelligence and strong memory do not by themselves become the source of the perfection of the soul, because there have been persons who were endowed with high-level of intelligence but who however sank into the lowest abysses of human fall and/or who misused their intelligence and intellect for selling out themselves and the others. So, intelligence by itself is not a source of absolute value. Intelligence and memory are not absolute values, rather they are rated as tools for attaining true values.

People, more or less, measure some of the values with their own innate nature and intellect, included among such values are truthfulness, honesty and standing by one's words. But sometimes the matter reaches such a stage the reality of which cannot be understood by all and rather the superior ones (those who are above the others in respect of spiritual perfection and knowledge of the religion) should understand it and teach it to the others and even, more significant than this, some of the values are not recognizable with man's ordinary thought. It is there that wahy rushes to the help of man and makes those values recognizable. Many of the moral and legal issues in the value system of Islam are determined just on the basis of wahy and their limits, terms and details are defined by the Divine Law. For example, we briefly know that if we tell a lie which causes an innocent person to be released from the hands of an oppressor, such lie does not have the indecency the other lies have, but how far and with what conditions? These are the issues to be determined by the Divine law. So, the basis of values consists of the virtues, qualities and manners which exalt and perfect man's soul. Among the values which are propounded in various communities of the world, there are matters which all people have more or less accepted but which they are unable to understand. All know that justice is good. But what is the criterion

for this goodness? All know that truthfulness and honesty are good. But which truthfulness and which honesty? All know that the spirit of self-sacrifice is beautiful, but by what criterion? If we acquire these criteria properly, we can judge in cases of doubt and mistake properly. For example, today, in all world communities, freedom is propounded as a great value, so that if any one says: I oppose freedom, it is as if he has said that I oppose the light of the sun. But do all know as to what is the criterion for this value.

The value of Freedom

The word "freedom" has a very broad concept and has different meanings. Certainly it can not, with this extent, be a criterion for value and the reason for making mistakes and misusing these concepts is this very fact that these values have been spread without acquiring their criterion and that the people, too, have accepted them for the sake of their sensual desires.

Anyhow, the desirability of freedom is not absolute. Rather, it is a means and tools for that spiritual perfection which is attained as a result of the person's free will and free choice. Suppose that if we leave a child free in a house where the child is surrounded by explosives or poisonous medicines, the child can freely light the match and approach the gas capsule and/or can throw the lit match near a vessel of gasoline or can consume a poisonous medicine, have we (by so doing) caused the child to become perfected or have we caused it to be killed? Is, from the viewpoint of logic and intellect, giving such freedom to the child correct? Or, should the child be left free to the extent that it does not harm itself and the others? Of course, if we tie up the child's hands and legs or confine it to a cage, it will never make human growth.

The child should be left free, but within a specified and planned

framework and should not be left totally free. When this child reaches maturity and distinguishes between good and bad, then he should be left free. Also human individuals in different societies have different degrees of wisdom, perfection and recognition. If the general people (in a society) are not perfectly aware and the means for any kind of action be at their disposal, its result will be nothing but destruction for that people. It is not proper on the strength of the fact that freedom is an absolute value, to make all things for all individuals free so that they will behave in any way they choose. This is a wrong logic. This is of the inauspicious souvenirs of the Western culture which has spread in our society. We should know these anti-values and separate them from the true values so that we can bring our society near to more and more growth on the basis of the Islamic values and attain that perfection which, if not achieved by man, can be replaced by nothing else.

Commitment and Sense of Duty

We have already mentioned that value is sometimes applied to man's free conduct (the actions he performs out of free will) and it is said that such and such an action is valuable and this term "value" is sometimes applied to the final goal of these conducts and it is expressed that for what value(s) such and such actions are performed. In other words, in a value system, firstly we should take into view a final goal so that for attaining that final goal the actions become valuable, provided that that very goal itself has innate and genuine value, and secondly we choose such conducts that are commensurate with that value. The most general and universal valuable conduct which exists in all value systems (whether or not those who propound that system are heedful of that general value.) is commitment and being bound to fulfil the duties and responsibilities.

In the midst of such kinds of systems which are propounded in the world, one of the European moral philosophers named Kant notices this point and says: "A good action is that which is fulfilled for the sake of the fulfilment of duty." He has properly understood this far that a general value for all actions and conducts is the fulfilment of the duty. But what has been away from his view and has remained undone (in his expressions) is that the fulfilment of the duty itself is not the final end, rather its value is for the sake of another genuine and innate value, named man's "final perfection" which is attained in the light of proximity to Allah.

The word "committed' which is used in today's public culture, is applied to the one who attempts to know his duty and fulfil it. But in Islam, we have a by far richer and more meaningful term than the terms "commitment" and "being bound over" and that is the beautiful term "Taqwā" (piety). Taqwā is that very commitment which is propounded in other moral systems, plus the particular specifications which have arisen out of the Islamic attitude and culture. Although there have been detailed discussions about the concept of **taqwā** and basically in all sermons of the ṣalātul-Jumu'ah (Friday prayer), it (taqwā) should be enjoined and emphasized, however, as it suits the matter, we express a few points briefly in this connection in so far as it concerns the discussion.

Taqwā

The term "taqwā" which is from the root "wiqāyah" and which means "guarding' is applied where some thing which is exposed to danger and corruption is to be guarded. This is the literal meaning of **"Wiqāyah"** and also **"Taqwā"** which is the infinitive mood and/or the verbal noun of **"ittiqā'"**, contains this same meaning. But **"taqwā"**, as a moral concept, has a particular point and that is that man feels that as a result of some conducts, the perfection and purity of his soul and the value of his being are endangered.

Here, two basic points exist which separate the moral **taqwā** from its other meanings, the first point is that what is in danger is man's soul, not his body and physique and the second point is that the danger which threatens a man's soul, is his own conduct, not the other men's conduct, nor the natural events. So, it is appropriate that man behaves in such a way as to remain guarded so that his soul will not be contaminated, will not fall in respect of value, will not be fallen and declined and will not be afflicted with eternal torment. In such cases man has naturally also fear of contamination or danger, because if he does not have fear, he will not attempt to guard himself. That is why in the concept of **taqwā**, the concept of fear has also been guaranteed and the expressions of the Holly Qur'ān and the **riwāyāt** and the case of common usage, indicate that this is the case:

"واتقوا يوماً لاتجزى نفس عن نفس شيئاً ..."

"And be on guard against a day when no soul shall avail another in the least ... (2:48,123)."

Fear the day when no one comes to the help of another one and for such fearing, guard yourselves from such danger (both the meaning of guarding and the meaning of fear are considered.).

In Islamic attitude which is based on **At-Tawḥīd** (monotheistic) viewpoint, we know all effects to be from Allah. Although there exist causes and means for these effects, but eventually It is Allah Who moves the chain of the world of being, Who is the cause of all causes and Who is the Maker of all means. Therefore, on the basis of **At-Tawḥīd** in actions if a danger threatens a person, it is also in the control of Allah. So, if a person fears lest in future his existence, his life, his perfection and purity and also his honour and nobility be endangered, from the **At-Tawḥīd** outlook (the outlook based on **At-Tawḥīd**), he fears lest the Almighty Allah should provide the means so that he will fall, whether in worldly means or the means of the Hereafter. So this fear eventually leads to fear of Allah and so if we fear lest we should fall, we should fear Allah, **ie**, lest Allah should let us fall, or if we fear lest our soul should be polluted or lest we should become afflicted with eternal torment and remoteness from Allah's mercy, we should fear Allah and regard Him as the Maker of all causes and this attitude becomes the cause and source for **taqwā** be attached to the Almighty Allah in the Islamic culture.

Do meditate about the **āyāt** of the Holy Qurān.

The Holy Qur'ān says:

"يا ايّها الذين آمنوا اتقوا اللّه ..."

"O you who believe! be careful of (your duty to) Allah ... (59:18).

The word "**ittaqū**" means be careful, guard yourself, but what role does the

word "**Allah**" have here? "Allah" is the object of the verb "**ittaqū**", it means fear Allah and guard yourselves against that danger which threatens you from Allah as punishment for the (bad) actions you do out of free choice.

So, it became clear that **taqwā** is that very commitment towards the fulfilment of the duties with richer and more fruitful concepts. That is to say, in the concept of **taqwā**, both the spiritual source of **taqwā** which consists of fear of danger and the fact that the effects and emergence of these dangers and falls are in Allah's hands have been noticed. It is He Who can make this danger reach man, Who can descend torment upon him or keep him secure from those dangers. and since the man's fall in the Hereafter is the torment in hell, sometimes fire and torment have been regarded as pertaining to **taqwā**:

"... فاتقوا النار التی وقودها الناس والحجارة ..."

"... *Then fear fire whose fuel is people and stones ... (2:24).*"

The like of the above **āyah** has also been employed from the root word "**wiqāyah**":

"... قوا انفسکم و اهلیکم نارا ..."

"... *Save yourselves and your families from a fire ... (66:6).*"

The word "قوا **qū**" (save) is from that very root word "**wiqāyah**". So, sometimes **taqwā** is attributed to the fire, torment and hell, due to the fact that it (**taqwā**) is the means which hinders man from fall. Also, on some occasions, **taqwā** is attributed to a time:

"واتقوا یوماً لاتجزی نفس عن نفس شیئاً ..."

"*And be on guard against a day when no soul shall avail another in the least ...(2:48,123).*"

Fear the day when no one rushes to the help of the other and no one suffices another one's cause. That day is the **Qīyāmah** (Resurrection Day). Another point which should be taken into view in **taqwā** is that sometimes **taqwā** is regarded as the adjective of the verb itself and its application is meant to enjoin performing the prayers (and other religious duties) and to desist from the sins and sometimes too it is applied just to desisting from the sins:

"لا يقل عمل مع تقوى"

"*No (good) action, if coupled with* **taqwā** *is little.*[17]"

In the above **riwāyah**, good action has been placed alongside **taqwā**, namely, fulfil good actions and do not commit sins. So, according to one probability, by **taqwā** in the above **riwāyah** it is meant that if you want your good actions to be useful, you should also desist from bad actions, otherwise the bad actions cause the effects of the good actions to be destroyed, too. For example, if you collect money in a bag, but however there is a hole in the bottom of the bag, though you have worked and taken trouble too, but because there is a hole in the bottom of the bag, you have saved nothing. According to a **riwāyah**, the Holy prophet (SA) of Islam said to his companions: "The one who utters **At-Tasbīḥātul-Arba'ah** (The four praises): **'subḥānallāhi wal-ḥamdu lillahi wa lā ilāhaillallahu wallāhu akbar'**, for each praise Allah grows a tree in Paradise for him." One of the Companions of the prophet (SA) remarked: "O the prophet (SA) of Allah! so, we have plenty of trees in Paradise." The Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam replied: "If you do not send a fire to burn the trees." Good actions bear (good) fruits in case they are accompanied by **taqwā**, namely, by desisting from the sins.

Therefore, one of the cases of the application of **taqwā** is the very desisting

from the sins and its other application consists of that spiritual state which becomes the source of the fulfilment of duties and desisting from the forbidden acts. Also, sometimes **taqwā** is applied to that state of fear which becomes the origin of this action and eventually another case of the application of **taqwā** is a spiritual state which is realized in man's soul. This fixed spiritual quality which is called the well-grounded quality, is a fixed spiritual state which is present in man's soul and which is not quickly given up. Those who during years of assiduity and practice, have acted according to their duties, a well-grounded quality develops in them so that automatically, anywhere a duty is to be performed, they immediately act.

In a broader definition and explanation it should be expressed that man's spiritual states are divided into two groups; one group consists of transient, changeable and unstable states which states, in the philosophical terminology is interpreted by "**ḥāl**" (natural disposition) and the other group consists of permanent, stable and well-grounded qualities in the soul which is interpreted as "**malakah**" (fixed spiritual quality). These states and qualities are propounded in the case of all the value behaviours of man. Chastity, modesty, self-sacrifice and the like, are sometimes in the form of a transient state and sometimes in the form of a constant spiritual quality and it exists in the form of a **malakah** in the soul.

In the traditional and classical ethics, the discussion is on **malakāt**, namely, those constant and firm qualities which exist in individuals' souls, but in value concepts in the general meaning, individual and personal behaviours which stem from transient states should also be discussed. That is, for the clarification of the value system of a school (of thought) it does not suffice that we just rely on the **malakāt**, because eventually the question may arise as to what value does this behaviour, which has not reached the level of

malakah, has from the viewpoint of this system. Is it totally lacking in value? Certainly this is by no means the case. So, the value of behaviours should also be discussed irrespective of **malakāt**. Consider a youth who has just reached maturity (from the point of view of the religious duties). When he performs his actions with a divine motive, his deed is **taqwā**, even though **malakah** may not yet have come into existence in him. The expressions of the Holy Qur'ān and the Infallible Imams (SA) too are mostly viewing the behaviour and do not mean that one should necessarily have the **malakah of taqwā**. Because if a person religiously becomes mature just today, he is duty-bound to have **taqwā**. Besides all these, basically the **malakāt**, from two aspects, have direct and close relationship with actions and conducts, one that they (**malakāt**) are themselves caused by behaviours, namely, they come into existence as a result of practice, assiduity and continued action and on the other hand, they are the cause of further actions. Therefore, **taqwā**, in the meaning of an abstract title conforms to actions, not just **malakah** and that spiritual quality which is discussed in ethics.

The other matter which should not be neglected in regard to **taqwā** is that when we say that in the value system of Islam no good action is outside **taqwā**, this imagination should not occur that just physical and perceptible action is meant; rather by action is meant here philosophical concept, that is, any kind of activity which stems from man's soul, whether it is in man's heart and the environment of the mind, or outside the body and on external matters, whether it be physical action or spiritual action. When you are seated, your body is not in movement and you are not bringing about changes in external matters, but with thinking and meditating, you can fulfil an action which has value and which is rewarded in the Hereafter or **vice-versa, ie**, an action which is among severe and cardinal sins, such as unduly suspecting your

faithful brothers.

Some times even refraining from an action becomes the proof of **taqwā**. Suppose a youth faces a situation which tempts the commitment of a sin, but he controls himself and does not commit that sin. Here, apparently no action has been fulfilled, but in reality a great action has taken place and that is deciding to desist from the sin and in the terminology of **fuqahā** (the Islamic jurisprudents), it is **kaffun-nafs** (controlling one's self), that is, a spiritual energy should be spent so that man can restrain himself from committing a sin. Hence, taqwā includes both the palpable, external and physical actions as well as the spiritual actions and even desisting from (sinful) actions, when it is with decision and out of consciousness. But if desisting from a sinful action is unconsciously and without intention, such as when a man is asleep and in this state no sin is committed by him, such a person has (in that condition) desisted from sin(s), but his action is not **taqwā**, rather it is utter negation and there is no affirmative aspect, nor spiritual activity in it, because neither spiritual energy has been spent, nor any decision has been taken for any thing. So, those who imagine that **taqwā** is just desisting from sin(s) and thus keep aloof from the community so that no error and sin might be committed by[18] them have in fact performed no action and are not **muttaqī** (possessed of **taqwā**, virtuous, pious). Taqwā requires spiritual activity.

We give another example: In a scene of wrestling, two persons are busy wrestling at a gymnasium and around the scene, there are a number of spectators watching them. After some time of struggle, one of the two wrestlers falls on ground and as wrestlers call it becomes knocked down and the other wrestler who has not been knocked down will be declared as the winner. Well, as for those spectators who are seated around the scene and who have not been knocked down and who are also seated or standing erect,

are they winners too?

The answer is quite clear. They have not taken part in this event so that a case for winning and losing would come forth. **Taqwā** is when a man draws sword against Satan and against one's soul and succeeds to guard himself from evil and commit no sins. **Taqwā** is an affirmative action and a positive activity, be it in one's soul or in his body. Of course the physical actions after all stem from spiritual activity and arise out of will-power and determination.

Stages of Taqwā

The other point which concerns **taqwā** is that **taqwā** has certain stages and it is not such that we could say it exists or it does not exist. Rather it is a matter with stages and these stages are innumerable and have no definite limits and extents either. In the **āyah** of the Holy Qur'ān,

"... ان اکرمکم عندا... اتقیکم"

"*... surely the most honourable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty) (49:13).*"

The word اتقی (**atqā**) meaning the most honourable is in the superlative degree. This meaning is applied in a case where one thing has different stages, being little or in excess and/or intensity and weakness. For example, the one who performs the (obligatory) prayers so that he will be immune from Allah's torment and would not go to Hell, has attained one degree of **taqwā** and relation with Allah, but this is a low stage and a weak relation. A better stage and a stronger relationship with Allah belongs to the one who performs the **Wājib salawāt** not only for the sake of immunity from Allah's retribution, but also because he wishes to enter the sphere of Allah's mercy and to enjoy His

eternal blessings. Such a person, besides performing the **wājib** (obligatory) **ṣalawāt** is also attentive of the **mustaḥabb** (recommended but not obligatory) **ṣalawāt** and tries to perform more and more **mustaḥabb** acts. The loftiest stage and degree belongs to **awliyā'** (Allah's friends), that is, even if they know that in spite of fulfilling this religious obligation (the **ṣalawāt**), still Allah will take them to Hell, but He is pleased with them, they still recite **ṣalawāt** in order to acquire Allah's pleasure and love. The same is also the case (with them), if they know that even there is no Hell and paradise. In some supplications of the Infallible Imams (AS), it has appeared that they say (to Allah): "O Allah! If you take me to Hell and burn me for thousands of years, your love does not come out of my heart and if I know that your pleasure is in that I burn in the fire of Hell for ever, that fire will be desirable for me." Of course this supposition (that Allah might take the Infallible Imams (AS) to Hell...) is contrary to the truth and there is no room for the probability of such a thing, but the spiritual state of such persons (The Infallible Imams (AS) and all other Allah's friends) is such. They do not demand Paradise and Hell and seek only Allah's meeting and pleasure. The following words are well-known from **Amirul-Mu'minīn** (The Commander of the Faithful), Al-Imam 'Alī (AS) who says: "O Allah! I do not worship You out of fear of torment and desire for the Paradise, rather I worship You because you are lovable and worthy of being worshipped."

Anyhow, **taqwā** has different stages and naturally that nearness to Allah (pleasing Allah, winning Allah's favour) which is attained due to **taqwā** will have different degrees. Examples of that too, sometimes in our time, are witnessed in the combatant brothers and in their last wills. Sometimes they write and sometimes it comes to their tongue that: "O Allah, we have not come to the warfront to be rewarded with **Al-ḥūrul-'Īn** (The Pure beautiful

mates in paradise), we have not come for **jihād** to just be released of the torment of Hell, rather since we love You and seek Your pleasure and meeting, we sacrifice our unworthy lives.

The above points were a brief description about the concepts which are propounded about **taqwā** and this word by itself denotes all these delicate and precise concepts and hence it becomes clear why in the Islamic culture this word (**taqwā**) has been so much emphasized:

So, taking into consideration the **āyah** of the Holy Qur'ān,

"... ان اکرمکم عندا... اتقیکم"

"... *surely the most honourable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty) (49:13).*"

it becomes quite clear that the most general and overall value regarding moral (Permanent) dispositions and behaviour is **taqwā** and any other thing which has value will be one of the proofs of taqwā. If justice and seeking the truht have value, it is because they are of the proofs of **taqwā**. If the acquisition of knowledge is of value, it is because in the Islamic culture it is regarded as one of the proofs of **taqwā**; likewise, the other values, such as self-sacrifice.

The Relationship of Taqwā with AT-Tawḥīd

As for the relationship of **taqwā** with **At-Tawḥīd**, what is of significance and should be paid attention to is that in the value system of Islam, **taqwā**, without relationship with Allah has no value and it is directly or indirectly related to Allah. Even this it is said:

"... فاتقوا النّار ..."

"... *Then fear Fire ... (2:24).*"

The fire is to be feared because it is "Allah's torment"; or

"واتقوا يوما ..."

"And guard yourselves against a day ... (2:281)."

The **Qiyāmah** (Resurrection Day), too, is to be guarded against because it is the day of Allah's judgment and the day of Allah's reward and punishment and **taqwā** becomes related and associated with it. In other words, since **taqwā** includes fear and the fear desired in Islam is the fear of Allah, so this concept includes relationship with Allah and so long as we do not know Allah and do not know Him as the possessor of all Perfections and powers, no room will be found for having **taqwā** towards Him (for fearing Him).

The more significant relationship which **At-Tawḥīd** has with **taqwā** is from the viewpoint of acquiring **taqwā**, in the way that when we learned that **taqwā** is a general value and the **malakah** of **taqwā** is one of the most excellent **malakat** with which man is related, we should know how this **malakah** is acquired. One general way common to all **malakat** is practice, that is, any one who wants to acquire a permanent spiritual disposition, should practice and repeat the actions related to it so that that **malakah** will emerge out of him.

As for the **malakah** of **taqwā** (so that it will emerge in **mu'minūn** as a permanent spiritual disposition and lifts them to the most excellent of values), the main condition is paying attention to Allah, in the way that the greater is man's attention to Allah, the better he is able to fulfil his duties and provide the ground for the emergence of malakah of **taqwā** in his soul. It is true that many people perform some actions without paying attention to Allah or desist from some actions, but these kinds of conducts are not the source of that value attached to **taqwā** which is propounded in Islam. These provide a

ground for perfection and have imperfect causality. This cause reaches its true effect and aquires perfect causality when it has relationship with Allah, be regarded as a means for man's getting near to Allah, winning Allah's pleasure and favour and for his eventual perfection and be fulfilled for the sake of its very being a means (towards winning Allah's pleasure), not out of other motives.

Suppose in a society in which theft and treachery is regarded indecent, a person avoids committing theft so that his social value will not decrease or his reputation will not be damaged, such a person has desisted from a sin, but never attains that value which is propounded in the Islamic **taqwā**, because a voluntary action has value when it is fulfilled for the sake of that eventual desired goal behind it. If desisting from sin is for the sake of Allah, it has that eventual value, but if it is because of fear of the people and fear of legal torment and persecution, it will no longer have that value. So, all value action of ours should be in relation to Allah and take place for the sake of getting near to Allah, winning His pleasure, favour and mercy and immunity from His torment.

In the following **āyah** of the Holy Qur'ān,

"يا ايها الذين آمنوا اتقوا اللّه ولتنظر نفس ما قدمت لغد واتقوا اللّه ان اللّه خبير بما تعملون و لاتكونوا كالذين نسوا اللّه فانسيٰهم انفسهم اولئك هم الفاسقون ٥ "

"O you who believe! fear Allah, and let every soul consider what it has sent on for the morrow, and fear Allah; surely Allah is Aware of what you do. And be not like those who forsook Allah, so He made them forsake their own souls: these it is that are the transgressors (59:18-19)."

These two basic points have been mentioned for the acquisition of **taqwā**; one to be attentive to the fact that the Almighty Allah is always present and conscious and that we are in His presence and the other is that the Almighty Allah spares the reward and the punishment for no action and that He returns the result of all our actions to ourselves. Paying attention to these matters causes man to, with the fulfilment of the duties, attain divine **taqwā**.

The point which is contrary to **taqwā**, namely, that which is propounded as anti-value, is **Fisq** (evil-doing) and **Fujūr** (wickedness or debauchery); and **Fāsiq** (evil-doer) and **Fājir** (the debauchee) is the one who does not reck any danger (neither apparent and material dangers nor the dangers which damage his humanity), and accepts no border for his own life and who, waywardly and licentiously moves in any direction he chooses to. Although, in the Holy Qur'ān, **taqwā** is sometimes applied in the face of **fujūr** and sometimes in the face of **fisq**, but its proof is the same.

" و نفس و ما سوىها فألهمها فجورها و تقوىها ٥ "

"And the soul and Him Who made it perfect, Then He inspired it to understand what is right and wrong for it (91:7-8)."

and/or:

" ... ام نجعل المتقين كالفجار ٥ "

"... Or shall We make those who guard (against evil) like the wicked (38:28)?"

In the above **āyāt** of the Holy Qur'ān, **taqwā** has been propounded as a general value and **fujūr** has been propounded as an anti-value. The same is

true of the **āyah** mentioned before,

"ولاتكونوا كالذين نسواالله فانسيهم انفسهم، اولئك هم الفاسقون ٥ "

"And be not like those who forsook Allah, so He made them forsake their own souls: these it is that are the transgressors (59:19)."

These verses first emphasize **taqwā**:

"يا ايّها الذّين آمنوا اتّقوا اللّه و لتنظر نفس ما قدّمت لغد واتّقوا اللّه انّ اللّه خبير بما تعملون ٥ "

"O you who believe! fear Allah, and let every soul consider what it has sent on for the morrow, and fear Allah; surely Allah is Aware of what you do (59:18)."

Then, it (the Holy Qur'ān) mentions the point opposite to it:

"... اولئك هم الفاسقون ٥ "

"... These it is that are the transgressors ... (59:19)

The term Fujūr, in the root of the word, means impudicity and licence and **fisq,** as the etymologists have mentioned is that something comes out of its natural shell, for example, if a date comes out of its natural shell, about it is said: **"fisquttamr"**. Also man's existence has been surrounded by a natural border which is called the border of **'ubūdiyyah'** (worship to Allah). If man comes out of this shell and transgresses that limit which Allah has ordained

for him. he has committed fisq, just as taqwā is the observance of that very natural and godly border. Anyhow, the most general concept of value which has positive value, is **taqwā**, and the most general anti-value or concept which has negative value is **fisq** and **fujūr**.

'Ibādah (worship to Allah)

One of the other value concepts of Islam, which is particular to the (monotheistic and godly cultures and communities, is worshipping Allah and serving Him, for, all world communities more or less accept the concept of **taqwā**, yet they consider its proofs to be the things which are probably different from our Islamic attitude.

For more explanation of this concept, which is particular to the monotheistic cultures, we present an introduction. We said that the fulfilment of the duties and being bound over the responsibilities is a general value. Now let us see what these responsibilities are and who is the one who calls to account for these responsibilities?

Usually, the responsibilities are divided into three groups, of which two groups have universal acceptance and one group is particular to the religious and theist communities. As for the responsibilities which have been accepted in all human communities, one is responsibility towards the community, so that if individuals do not fulfil them, they will be called to account, and the other is towards the conscience of the individual himself, namely, everybody has certain duties towards his conscience which he should fulfil even if the society does not call him to account. In the midst of this, there is another kind of responsibility, too, which is just accepted in godly communities and that is the responsibility towards Allah and naturally those people submit to it who believe in Allah. But if we view the matter with a wider outlook, we will

see that we (on the basis of the divine outlook in Islam) have just one kind of responsibility and that is just towards Allah, of which the cases are however different, not that there are numerous ones who call to account for them. It is Allah, Who has created man's existence, has granted him the blessings and has endowed him with social life, intellect and conscience.

So, the true caller to account is Allah and all responsibilities are towards Him, but their cases are different. Sometimes Allah calls to account for the duties which He Himself has ordained as **'ibādah** (acts of worship), for example, He calls a person to account and asks him why he has not performed the **wājib ṣalawāt** or why he has not fulfilled the other act(s) of worship. Also, sometimes Allah calls one to account for the duties He has ordered regarding His (other) servants, for example, he asks: "Why did not you observe My command regarding the poor?" Hence, the poor or the community themselves have no right upon the others and cannot call the others to account, unless Allah has permitted it.

The case of one kind of responsibilities is the individual himself, not that the individuals call one to account for it, eg, Allah asks why did you oppress yourself? If a person attempts a suicide or any other action which is a proof of opprression to one' self, Allah calls the person to account for the same and asks him: "Why did you oppress yourself?" Again the one who calls to account and who holds responsible is Allah. So, on the basis of At-Tawḥīd (monotheistic) view, all responsibilities are basically towards the Almighty Allah.

The Basis of Responsibility

Taking into consideration the above matters, the question arises as to what is the basis of responsibility and how is it that Allah calls us to account? This

is a technical discussion which should be propounded in the philosophy of ethics and in the philosophy of law. But here, we just point out the secret of the solution of this matter.

Basically, the caller to account can be the one who is the owner of the case for which some one is to be called to account. If some one enters another one's house (without being permitted), the inmate of house can call the newly entered person to account in case the former is the owner of the house. As for the public properties of the society, too, because all are owners (of the same) to some proportion, they have the right to call to account. So, man can call to account when he has a right towards some thing and owns some thing.

As for us men, the same is the case, namely, the one who calls us to account should be the one who is the owner of us and the owner of the things which are at our disposal and who can say: "Why, I granted you being and endowed you with a healthy body, why did you oppress this body?"; "Why, I gave you the power of meditation and intellect, why did not you use it in the proper way?" ; "Why, I put clean air at your disposal, why did you pollute it?" And all such accounts are called to by the one who is the owner, otherwise, there would be no right for calling to account. Therefore, true ownership belongs to Allah and it is just He Who has the right to call to account, to ordain duties and hold responsible and Whom we are truely owned by, so that this being owned is never negated, contrary to nominal cases of being owned which are negatable and transferable, such as the house, the car or the dress which you own, but which on selling them, you no longer own them. This is a nominal ownership which is both vanishable and transferable and among the things which the Almighty Allah cannot do, one is this very fact that He cannot release His servants from servitude (to Him)! Because it is an impossible matter. Allah cannot drive any being out of being His creatures

and say: You are no longer owned by Me and My creature. As long as any thing exists in the world, its being is the same as being the creature of and owned by Allah and coming out of being owned means to become nothing.

Creational and Divine Legislative 'Ibādah

Taking into consideration this outlook which takes form on the basis of **At-Tawḥīd**, each effect of the creatures is the emergence of an effect from servitude to Allah, because its being is the same as being owned (by Allah). The Heat and the light which emanate from the sun, the breeze which blows, the rain which falls, the plant which grows and the flowers and fruits which appear on the trees are effects of the being owned of all these beings and indicators of the manner of creation and planning of the same. Hence, all the movements of the beings can be regarded as a creational **'ibādah** (a creational servitude to Allah), that is, any being, willy-nilly, whatever effect emerges out of him, has manifested a sign of his being owned by and his servitude to the Almighty Allah. In the Holy Qur'ān, it has been said that all beings praise Allah and even there are a number of suwar which begin with the following sentences:

"يسبح للّه ما فی السمٰوات و ما فی الارض ..."

"Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth declares the glory of Allah ... (64:1)."

In other verses of the Holy Qur'ān, it has been said that all things make **sajdah** (prostration) to Allah, even the shadows which fall on the ground:

"... یتفیؤا ضلاله عن الیمین والشمائل سجداً للّه ..."

"... Its (very) shadows return from right and left, making obeisance to Allah ... (16:48)."

More delicate than these, the Holy Qur'ān says that the sound of the thunder and the song of nightingales and the twitter of sweet-singing birds are all praise of Allah:

"تسبح الرعد بحمده والملائكة من خيفته ..."

"*And the thunder declares His glory with His praise, and the angels too for awe of Him ... (13:13).*"

And finally, the most general **āyah** of the Holy Qur'ān in this connection is the following:

"... وان من شيء الاّ يسبح بحمده و لكن لاتفقهون تسبيحهم ..."

"*And there is not a single thing but glorifies Him with His praise, but you do not understand their glorification ... (17:44).*"

One of the interpretations made for this group of **āyāt** is that they mean creational **'ibādah** (worship), creational **tasbīḥ** (praising, glorifying, and creational sujūd (prostration), namely, all the movements and the effects of their existence are signs of their being servants of and owned by the Almighty Allah which on one hand manifest Allah's qualities of beauty and perfection and on the other hand, declare Allah's being free from defects, destruction, naught, and the negative qualities (the qualities which Allah is devoid of and which can never be attributed to Him). That aspect which is demonstrative of the qualities of perfection (of Allah) is called **ḥamd** (praising Allah's qualities) and that aspect which is indicative of and which establishes transcendence of Allah from defects is called **tasbīḥ** (praising Allah's

transcendence over all defects), this is a creational **'ibādah** (servitude) to Allāh. The limbs of our bodies have this 'ibādah too. Our hands, without our will-power, praise Allah, our feet, without our will-power praise Allah, the same is true also of the other limbs and parts of our bodies. Yet, there is also a divine legislative and voluntary **'ibādah** which is particular to men. Although the free actions (the actions which we perform out of our own free will) in any form they might be, are also signs of servitude to Allah and are creational **'ibādāh**, but in terms of divine legislation and the sphere of selection and free choice, **'ibādah** is applied to particular actions. A man, who is without **'ibādah** (without servitude), does not and will not exist in the world, because the reality of his existence is being possessed (being owned) and is dominated by the powers which have surrounded him and which have affected his effects and movements. In this midst, if he recognizes the true Effective One (Allah), learns the way to reach Him and moves in that very direction, he has made **'ibādah** to Allah, but if he does not know Him (Allah) and does not step in His path, he has not fulfilled divine legislative **'ibādah**. Any how, man's conduct is a conduct of **'ibādah** (a conduct of servitude), either **'ibādah** to Allah or **'ibādah** to the others; **'ibādah** to the Shayṭān (satan), **'ibādah** to one's self, **'ibādah** to the self-made idols or **'ibādah** to the null beings which have no external reality at all.

In the Holy Qur'ān, Allah says:

"الم اعهد اليكم يا بنى ادم ان لاتعبدوا الشيطان انه لكم عدو مبين ٥
و ان اعبدونى هذا صراط مستقيم ٥ "

"Did I not charge you, o children of Adam! that you should not serve the **shayṭan***? Surely he is your open enemy, And that you should serve Me; this is the right way (36:60-61)."*

In the above verses of the Holy Qur'ān, Allah says that man is on two paths, one the way of **'ibādah** to Allah and the other the way of **'ibādah** to **Shayṭān** and Allah has advised the people to choose the way of **'ibādah** to Him which leads to their felicity and perfection.

The point which is necessary to notice here is that the concept of **'ibādah** in this sense is different from the meaning which is generally in our minds of **'ibādah** and which is just applied to a series of acts of worship and values such as the **wājib ṣalawāt, ṣawm** and **ḥajj** (specified pilgrimage to Makkah according to Islamic **sharī'ah**). In the concept of **'ibādah** in the extensive and general sense, all the free actions of man (all the actions which man fulfils out of free will) are **'ibādah**.

Now, if such actions and conducts have favourable effects on man's felicity and perfection and are pleased at by Allah they become 'ibādah to Allah, but if they cause man's fall, decline and his getting away from the (divinely ordained) end, they will be **'ibādah** to **shayṭān** and are rated as an anti-value. But in any way, they (man's free actions) are **'ibādah** and anyhow, we are not outside either of the two conditions, we are either in **'ibādah** to Allah or in **'ibādah** to **shayṭān**.

The conclusion derived from these preliminaries is that worshipping Allah and **'ibādah** to Him, too, have general and value-related concepts in the Islamic culture, as is the case with **taqwā**, so that an action fulfilled by an individual, a group, or a society has value when the title of **taqwā** and the title of worshipping Allah correspond to it. Even if an action is, in terms of the other value systems praise worthy and acceptable, but is not corresponded to by these two titles, in the value system of Islam it does not reach the necessary limit for value and is below the necessary limit. For example, helping the poor and the weak is a value which has been more or less accepted in all the ethical

systems of the world but in the value system of Islam it has no value in the abstract form and is generally regarded as a good action. Yet, (in the Islamic Value System) such actions reach the necessary level of value when they stem from the individual's faith, are fulfilled out of divine motive (out of motive of winning Allah's pleasure) and in one word, it has goodness of action (in accordance with Allah's command) and goodness of the doer having free will (divine motive), otherwise if it is merely regarded as an emotional matter, it will not be of much value and will not reach the necessary level of value either, because such emotion more or less exists in animals too, particularly the motherly emotion and the emotion of supporting one's kind which is observed in, for example, ravens too; therefore, it cannot be the only criterion for value.

Criticism on a Theory

This matter is in fact a response to one of the great foundations of the philosophy of ethics which is today prevalent in Western countries and which due to our Islamic insight being not very strong, has unfortunately more or less spread and penetrated among some groups of our society too. Many of the philosophers of ethics in Western countries regard the criterion for value to be serving the others and love for the others and say if an action is performed for the sake of personal benefit and with individual motive, it has no value and/or it is anti-value, but if it is performed with the motive of loving the others it will be desirable and of value. Some of our intellectuals too who have had discussions and writings in the field of ethics, have sought the relationship of **At-Tawḥīd** with the philosophy of ethics just here and have imagined that **At-Tawḥīd** means that man melts himself in the society and instead of "I" always says "We" and always takes "We" into consideration.

This matter is objectionable in the Islamic outlook from numerous viewpoints:

The first objection: The first objection is that **AT-Tawḥīd** has no concern with the social "I" and "We". In the previous discussions we have fully clarified that **At-Tawḥīd**, as an Islamic concept, means belief in the One God in the dimension of creativity, creational Lordship, Divine Legislative Lordship and in (Allah's) Being the (Only) Worshipped. **At-Tawḥīd** is not a sociological and psychological concept, rather it is a theological and philosophical concept, that is to know God as One and Only and to believe in His Oneness and to put this belief into effect in action. So, man's melting or not melting himself in the society has nothing to do with **At-Tawḥīd** as an Islamic concept.

The second objection: It is that the criterion for value is not just love for the others. Many of our actions are performed with individual motive and yet are of very high value. That faithful servant (of Allah) who gets up at mid-night in winters from the warm bed and engages in **'ibādah** to Allah on the cold and coarse carpeet of the mosque and starts supplicating and praying to Allah, is his action individual or social? Is this action performed out of the motive of serving the society or for attaining the good of the Hereafter and spiritual and eternal good of the individual himself? Whereas the Holy Qur'ān cites such persons with a very exalted interpretation and at the loftiest level of value and says:

"فلا تعلم نفس ما اخفى لهم من قرة اعين ..."

"So no soul knows what is hidden for them of that which will refresh the eyes ... (32:17)."

No one knows what felicity and joy the Almighty Allah has provided for such persons. Allah will give them such a great reward that no man's mind

can think of. So, it is not the case that values are confined to serving the others or, as there is a famous saying "**ibādah** is nothing but serving Allah's creatures."

The third objection: It is that not every love for the others is valuable and at least it does not have the necessary amount for value. We already expressed that care for the others is also observed among ravens, monkeys and in many other animals. But it is not the case that the emotion of care for the others is by itself sufficient for man's action and man's soul to attain value, rather they will be of value if they are with divine motive and this is not exclusive to emotion either. The satisfaction of instincts, with divine motive is **'ibādah** to Allah too. Eating, drinking and even sexual intercourse, if fulfilled with divine motive, are also **'ibādah**. So, the only criterion (according to Islam) is that firstly the action be approved by Allah (be in accordance with Allah's commands) and secondly it be with divine motive and the intention of getting close to Allah (winning Allah's pleasure), in one of the stages already expressed: Fear of punishment, covet for reward and hope for meeting Allah and winning His pleasure.

Clarification of the Ethical Theory of Islam

A significant matter to be noticed here and to be reasonably and philosophically clarified and justified is how human behaviour and permanent qualities become possessed of value through **'ibādah** to Allah and perfect obedience and humbling oneself before Allah? In this regard, from the outlook of Islam and **āyāt** of Holy Qur'ān and **riwāyāt**, we have no doubt, for the Almighty Allah says:

"و ما خلقت الجن و الانس الاّ ليعبدون ٥ "

"And I have not created the jinn and the men except that they should worship Me (51:56)."

The only aim of creation of man and of jinn who from the viewpoint of the Holy Qur'ān are two kinds of responsible (entrusted with duties) beings is just (their) serving the One God (Allah - The One and Only). Of course taking into consideration other āyāt (of the Holy Qur'ān) we come to realize that this is not the final goal, for this very **'ibādah** to Allah has in another **āyah** of the Holy Qur'ān been propounded as the right way.

"و ان اعبدونی هذا صراط مستقیم ٥ "

"And that you should serve Me; this is the right way (36:61)."

Worship Allah, this is the right way. The same thing which in the former **āyah** (56:51) had been mentioned as the aim of creation, has been introduced as the right way in the latter (61:36), meaning that **'ibādah** is a medium goal and above it there is another goal. That very act of **'ibādah** itself has been considered for a higher goal and that is attaining nearness to the Almighty Allah (attaining Allah's pleasure) in which all human virtues and perfections are summed up.

But for this theory to be presentable and defendable in the face of the other ethical and value theories of the world and particularly so that our educated youth will be able to defend the righteous position of Islam before other schools of thought, it is necessary to clarify this theory on the basis of intellectual reasons and philosophical proofs. The principles which are necessary for the clarification of this matter are three basic principles.

The First Principle:

It is that the criterion for the goodness and value of the action is the effect which a free conduct has on man's spiritual and intellectual perfection. For the clarification of this basic principle which is of the significant matters of the philosophy of ethics in the scientific and philosophical circles of the world, we express an analysis on the concept of value and anti-value and their equivalent in the Islamic culture, namely, "good" and "evil".

We regard certain things as good and also accept certain things as evil. For instance, all of us regard health to be good, rate knowledge, power and ability as good and opposite to them, regard sickness, being malformed, being ignorant, disabled and powerless to be evil. Philosophers have conducted a wise analysis on this concept and have come to the conclusion that the common aspect among all these goods consists of the perfection of the being and the common aspect among all the evils consists of the imperfection of the being. For instance, when we compare an ignorant man with a learned man, we observe that the learned man has a perfection which the ignorant man lacks. So, the being of the learned man is more perfect than the being of the ignorant man, and/or since a sick man does not have the power to defend against diseases and cannot confront aggressive microbes and loses his body's balance, his being is imperfect compared to a healthy person.

A brave man, in various phases, can achieve his goals, but a timid and cowardice cannot. Then they (the philosophers) have gone further and with a more careful analysis have come to the conclusion that perfection is a stage of being and imperfection is a stage of non-being and is a matter of non-being. Hence, we can regard being (existence) as equal to good, since it is being (existence) and regard non-being (non-existence) to be evil, since it is non-being (non-existence). Therefore, the good of every being is its perfection

and the evil of every being is its imperfection.

Sometimes the perfection of a being causes the imperfection of another being. The burning effect of the fire is the perfection of the fire, but if it falls into a harvest, it causes the destruction of the harvest. The cutting effect of knives and swords is their perfection. But when they contact the body of an innocent man, they cause his death. A microbe, has a perfection since it is a living being, but this very microbe, when enters our bodies, may afflict us with diseases and cause an imperfection for us. Maulawī, the great gnostic and poet has famous poems in which it is said that poison is good for the snake itself, but bad for the one who is stung by the snake.

Also sometimes the opposite is the case. A matter may be a non-existence, imperfection and in itself evil, but becomes good and the cause of perfection for another thing. You enter a garden and see a gardener cutting off the branches and leaves of a tree. If you are not aware of the gardening works, you will think that the gardener is doing a bad work, cutting off the branches and leaves of the tree which are apparently being and perfection for the tree. But if you are aware of the matters related to gardening, you know that the gardener cuts off some of the extra branches (which hinder the growth of the tree) so that the tree will grow more. Here, the non-existence of these branches is an imperfectional and non-existence matter, but for the tree it is considered to be good and causes the tree to grow better.

Now let us see on what the superiority of perfections depends?

We start this matter from plants. In your opinion, in comparison, which one is more perfect, a walnut tree or a plain tree? You certainly think a walnut tree is more perfect. Why? Because a walnut tree has something more than the plain tree and that is the fruit it (the walnut tree) bears. Therefore, since it has more effects of existence, it is more perfect. Comparison is in the

same manner between two walnut trees. That walnut tree is more perfect of which the final result and fruit is more, and the same is true of the walnut tree which is of less size but which gives more fruit, compared to the walnut tree which occupies more size, but has little fruit. Now let us compare an animal with a tree. Can the criterion for superiority be regarded to be the size of the animal? If it were so, a plain tree would be a thousand times more perfect than a nightingale.

But it definitely is not so. Because a nightingale has somthings more than a plant (somethings which a plant lacks), namely, besides its physical growth, it has senses and (the ability of) voluntary movement. It is the nightingale which on seeing a flower starts twittering and in which a feeling and sense emerge, a sense which a plain tree will never have. So the criterion for the superiority of a nightingale to a tree is not either's being bigger. But if we also compare two animals with each other, that animal which has more sense and stronger understanding is more perfect, not that one which is bigger in size, like an Arabian horse and a rhinoceros, an Arabian horse has more wits, has better leaping, is capable of performing more useful work and is more loyal than a rhinoceros, but a rhinoceros is just big in size.

Now let us consider a man. If we want to compare a man with trees and animals, what should we consider his superiority to be? Which one is more perfect, a man or a plain tree? Is a man more perfect or an elephant? Man's superiority to plants and animals is not in having more bodily growth, more physical power, more passions (carnal desires), greater power of defence and/or even more animal perceptions, these do not contribute to human perfection. If these were the criterion, then animals would be by far ahead of us (and this is not selfish of ours that since we regard ourselves more perfect, we should look for another criterion! This is a truely philosophical matter).

Rather what makes man superior to and more perfect than the animals and other beings is that human and divine soul of his which constitutes the proof for the following āyāt of the Holy Qur'ān:

"... و نفخت فيه من روحی ..."

"... *And I breathed into him of My spirit ... (15:29 and 38:72).*"

and,

"... فتبارك الله احسن الخالقين"

"... *so blessed be Allah, the best of the creators (23:14).*"

The question which is raised here is that is the value just in the superiority of man's spiritual perfections or are plant and animal perfections also of value?

Let us consider an apple tree. In an apple tree, taking root, turning green, bearing branches, leaves and even blossoms are considered perfection insofar as they cause bearing fruit, otherwise they will not be of value. These kinds of perfections are preliminary perfections which are not of value in themselves, rather they are preliminaries for eventual and genuine perfection, and value is acquired through them.

In man it is also true. If a growth emerges in the body by itself and does not cause that main, basic and eventual growth, it is an animal growth and will not be of any value for man from the viewpoint that he is man. A healthy body is valuable for man in case he uses it for his spiritual and intellectual progress, not if he misuses his health - using it for hurting the others. The same is true of other qualities too. For example, bravery is desirable from the

Islamic viewpoint when it is used in the way of man's spiritual and intellectual perfection and in the way of getting near to the Almighty Allah (winning Allah's pleasure and favour), otherwise 'Amr ibn 'Abd Wadd (the great (notorious) enemy of Islam) and some others like him were also brave and had this animal value. The superiority of a brave man, apart from his spiritual goal and perfection to another man is like the superiority of a rhinoceros to a horse and the superiority of an elephant to a gazelle. This preliminary perfection will be of value when it is used in the way of attaining that eventual human perfection, when it has been achieved for that and used in the way of attaining it (eventual human perfection). Justice, too, which in today's world culture has absolute value, in the view of the Holy Qur'ān is valuable since it is a preliminary stage for getting near to **taqwā**:

"... اعدلوا هو اقرب للتقوى ..."

"... *Act equitably, that is nearer to piety ... (5:8).*"

Otherwise, this sense is found in some animals like the honey-bee, termite and some others too. This is not an absolute human value. In the value system of Islam, justice is of value when it is in the way of Allah and for attaining a loftier goal and moves man towards that point of peak (that highest point of perfection).

The point which is necessary to be paid to here is the relationship between the philosophical good and the ethical good, but before clarifying this relationship, we will somewhat discuss about the good and the evil and their criterion.

Clarification of the Criterion for the Good and the Bad

One of the most disputed human matters in the course of the history of man's life has been the issue of the criterion for good and bad action and good and evil. Today, many of the world's philosophical schools which have the great universities of the Western World under their domination, including the Positivists maintain that good and bad are subjects to the persons' taste and inclination and that there is no reality beyond this like and dislike. In the Greek moral philosophy it was said that the criterion for value is moderation of three powers; the power of passion, the power of anger and the power of intellect. But the question remains to be answered as to who says that moderation should be the criterion for goodness and badness. Eventually, the highest ethical school which the West presented, was the ethics of Kant. Kant maintained moral axioms and stated that they are unquestionable; telling the trutht is absolutely good and there is no condition for it either, it is a criterion itself. When asked" in case telling the truth causes an innocent man to be killed, should one still tell the truth?" Kant replied: "One should tell the truth, this is an absolute value." This is the zenith of the Western thinking in the clarification of the philosophy of ethics. But Islam says: "Basically, action is a means not an end. A free action is performed for an end and receives its value from that end. In the philosophy of the morality of Islam, good is an action which drives man towards his eventual perfection, namely getting near Allah and bad is an action which drives man away from that end (ie, from attaining nearness to Allah) and from this it becomes clear why in Islam so much emphasis is laid on niyyah (intention); well, in fact it is man's niyyah which gives direction to his action.

As for the relationship between philosophical good and ethical good,

ethical good is propounded in relation to man's free conducts and actions and there is a good which is a means, because it is a quality for action and the nature of action is a means for the result and the end; but as for the desired result, it is not an ethical concept, rather it is a philosophical topic.

So, the ethical good is in one sense other than philosophical good, but is however not separate from it either and there is a cause and effect relationship between these two, and in other words, ethical good is preamble for philosophical good. Therefore, when we say that good action causes perfection for man's soul, the goodness of the action is an ethical concept, but the perfection of the soul is a philosophical concept.

The second principle:

In the clarification of the criterion for the evaluation of actions is the fact that perfection of the soul which man should attain through (good) free actions is nearness to Allah (winning Allah's pleasure and favour). About the meaning and concept of this **qurb** (nearness) to Allah various statements and views have been expressed about each one of which we will give some explanation to the extent necessary.

Various Meanings and Cases of the Application of Qurb

The first concept which in common conversations is applied about **'qurb'** is **qurb** in terms of place. For example, as when two persons are seated near or in proximity to each other, 'this person is near that person and/or this person is away from that person'. Is man's being near to Allah in this sense? Where (in the Holy Qur'ān) Āsiyah - the wife of Fir'awn (pharaoh) says:

"... ربّ ابن لی عندك بیتاً فی الجنة ..."

"... My Lord! build for me a house with Thee in the garden ... (66:11)."

Did she (by saying so) mean that a faithful person attains nearness of place with Allah in the Paradise? Those who know even the fundamentals of the Islamic beliefs will know that nearness to Allah is definitely not in this sense, because nearness of place is imagined among objects and Allah is not an object to have a place, to Whom another object becomes near or from Whom another object gets away. So, getting near to Allah does not mean nearness of place.

One of the other cases (of the application) of **qurb** in our conversations is the nearness in terms of time. About two persons living in a time close to each other it is said that they are **qarībul-'aṣr** (near in terms of time), **vis-a-vis** two beings, two individuals and/or two societies which have great time distance, one has been living thousands of years ago and the other is living today, about them it is said that they are away from each other. It is obvious that man's getting near Allah is not in terms of time either, because firstly Allah does not have a time, rather He encompasses all times, just as He has no place and is available at all places. Besides, being near and/or being away in terms of time and place in themselves do not create any perfection. Anyhow, nearness in terms of place and time is impossible with regard to the Almighty Allah and getting near Him in these two definitions is false. So, how is man to get near Allah?

One other kind of **qurb** which we have in common conversations is that two things are compared with each other in respect of resemblance in specifications, perfections and characteristics apart from time and place. can

in this sense be said that man gets near Allah? Does **qurb** to Allah mean that more resemblance to Allah is achieved? Some have attempted to interpret **qurb** to Allah in this way, but in reality this sense is incorrect too. because firstly, Allah does not resemble any thing, (as says the Holy Qur'ān):

"... ليس كمثله شيء ..."

"... *Nothing is like a likeness of Him ... (42:11).*"

and that sometimes the interpretation of "being like God" is applied, is a neglectful interpretation. Secondly, this comparison is where two beings are independent of each other. For example, when we compare two learned men with each other and say that the knowledge of this learned man is near that of the other learned man, none of these is dependent on and/or the ray of the other, rather each one of them is independent of the other, this learned man has a knowledge for himself and the other learned man has a knowledge for himself, we compare these two knowledges together and say this one is near that one. Such a comparison between man and Allah is not proper, because man has nothing independent of Allah and all he has is from Allah. Thirdly, Allah's perfection is infinite and each being, at least in the stage of existence has a phase of finiteness and limitation, and never the finite is comparable with the infinite. If you consider a line with a length of one metre and ask what proportion does this one metre line have with an infinite line, those who are even a little conversant with mathematics know that the answer to this question is that there is no proportion between the finite and the infinite. Now if instead of a one metre line a two-metre line is put, again the answer is "nothing" and even if we draw a line as long as the distance between the earth and the sun, and it is asked that what proportion does this line have to an

infinite line, again the answer will be "nothing". No matter how much man attains perfection, he is after all limited and is not a party in proportion to Allah's infinite perfections, to be said about him that he has now got some what nearer to Allah. Therefore, that some imagine that when man's perfection becomes more, his difference with Allah becomes less and in this sense he gets nearer to Allah, is due to short-sightedness in knowing Allah. Such comparisons can be assumed between objects and the beings which are independent of each other which do not have relation of existence with each other and one of which is not of the stages of the other and is not its effect, but between the existence-giving Cause and the effect such a comparison is totally wrong.

Also some have imagined that by **qurb** is meant just what the following verse of the Holy Qur'ān refers to:

"... و نحن اقرب اليه من حبل الوريد ٥ "

"... *And We are nearer him than his life-vein ... (50:16).*

namely, Allah is nearer to man than his life-vein.

Though this matter is true and no firmer and closer relationship between this (relation) can be assumed between Allah and His creatures, but it is clear that this **qurb** and nearness is not particular to the believers and that it exists not only for all men, whether believers, or the disbelievers, the pious, the lewd, but it also exists for all creatures and all creatures have this relationship with Allah.

Sometimes **qurb** is also applied in the sense of honour and formality. For example, we say that such and such a person is near to such and such a minister and is favoured by him, that is, they have friendly relations with each

other and if the former has a request, the latter will not reject it and will listen to him. About man's **qurb** to Allah, too, sometimes interpretation is made in this way, in the sense that man gets so near to Allah in the sense that Allah heeds his words, pays attention to his requests and hears his prayers.

Among these five meanings, only the last-mentioned meaning conforms to **qurb** of Allah, a **qurb** which is attained through worship and obedience to the Almighty Allah, as is said in a **ḥadīthun-qudsiyy**.

"لايزال العبد يتقرب الى بالنافلة حتّى اكون سمعه الذى يسمع به و بصره الذى يبصر به و يده التى يبطش بها"

"A servant (of Alah) owing to servitude (to Allah) attains such a position where the Almighty Allah becomes his hearing ears, his seeing eyes and his mighty hands.[19]"

A servant (of Allah) owing to servitude (to Allah) attains such a position that in accordance with the interpretation of the above **ḥadīth**, the Almighty Allah becomes his hearing ear, his seeing eye and his capable hand and it is clear that the prayer of such a servant (of Allah) will be heard (by Allah) and that the Almighty Allah will secure his needs and wants. But the question (which may be raised here) is that is such position just an honourary and formal position or is it an existential and true perfection? And our reply is that this position of **qurb** to Allah is a true perfection for human soul and that to become **mustajābud-da'wah** (one whose prayer is heard by Allah) and even the acceptance of one's intercession for the others with Allah are of the effects of this spiritual perfection, not that they are merely a credit and an agreement and in other words, the true meaning of **qurb** to Allah is the sixth meaning which we will now explain to the extent the situation demands.

For the clarification of this meaning, we should point out two noble philosophical matters the details of which should be sought in their own place and in the related books.

The first matter:

It is that the existence of each creature is the relation itself between the Creator and the creature and that no creature has any independence of the existence-giving Creator and this is a matter the clarification of which is rated among the honours of the great Islamic expert Ṣadrul-Muta'allihīn Ash-Shīrāzī and the philosophical expression of the fourth meaning of the above-mentioned meanings is also based on this very matter, that is, the reason why the Almighty Allah is nearer to each being than any other thing is the very fact that the existence of each creature is the relation itself to and dependence on Him (the Creator) and if this relation is cut off, it will no longer have any existence; it can be said that the existence of each creature in relation to the Almighty Allah is like the existence of a subjective figure for man which if set aside, will have no existence any longer and certainly the relation of the beings with the Almighty Allah is by far stronger than this example.

The second matter:

It is that the existence of the soul is of the category of the existence of science and in other words; just as the requisite for each physical existence is "extension", the requisite for each abstract existence is also "knowledge" which requisite is of course not anything outside the existence of the soul.

Taking into consideration these two matters, we conclude that whenever the existence of man's sould becomes more perfect, his knowledge will

become more perfect. The first stage of the perfection of the soul is attaining "self-awareness" and when one's self-awareness becomes perfect, he will find the reality of his existence which is the same as relation, belonging to and dependence on the Almighty Allah, namely, he will attain "self-awareness" and it is for this reason that in the Islamic culture "self-awareness" and "God-awareness" are coupled together. On the one hand, it has been said that:

"من عرف نفسه عرف ربه"

"Any body who knew himself knew his Lord."

and on the other hand, the Holy Qur'ān says:

"... نسوا اللّه فانساهم انفسهم ..."

"... Those who forsook Allah, so He made them forsake their own souls ... (59:19)."

Those who forsook themselves became afflicted with Allah's forsaking.

So, an inseparable relation exists between knowing one's self and knowing Allah and also between forsaking one's self and Allah's forsaking. The reality of "forsaking oneself" and "self-alienation" in the Islamic culture is this very matter that a person forgets his human identity and his attention is so diverted to this world's luxuries and pleasures that he forsakes his reality and his human perfection and felicity, namely, he forgets about his relation to and dependence on the Almighty Allah.

The conclusion is this that true perfection of man's soul is God-awareness (awareness of Allah) which has innumerable stages and more the man's celestial soul becomes perfect, the more his awareness of Allah will increase

and this awareness of one's self and of one's God is the same as the existence of the soul. Therefore, man's eventual perfection is his attaining perfect awareness and his innate and intuitive knowledge (knowledge acquired not through the five senses, but through illumination of one's heart) about the Almighty Allah and this awareness about Allah is the very true **qurb** to Allah which should be attained through efforts and endeavours. Therefore, the true meaning of **qurb** to Allah as an acquired perfection for man's soul consists of intuitive and inner **qurb** and the realization of this fact that man's existence is nothing but relation and attachment to the Almighty Allah and that it is not merely knowledge and acquired learning which are attained through concepts and by way of intellectual reasonings.

The third principle:

The clarification of the moral and value theory of Islam says that this perfection and **qurb** to Allah is attained just in the light of the conducts the general title of which is **'ibādah**, worshipping Allah, and virtuousness. To prove this principle from the philosophical point of view, too, requires a technical and complicated expression which does not suit this discussion. However, we try to explain, with a simple expression this principle, too.

We came to know that the Almighty Allah is not a physical and place-occupying being whom we could get near to with the movement of the body and traversing material distance and that no kind of physical action and reaction and body change and development can in itself have any role in changing man's relation to the Almighty Allah and that the truth of man's qurb to Allah is inner and intuitive nearness and attaining man's existential relationship with Him. Taking into consideration these points it can easily be accepted that what plays the main role in man's getting near to the Almighty

Allah is that very man's power of perceiving and witnessing, namely, the truth of his soul which in many cases is called "heart" and the free (voluntary) relationship which is established between man's heart and the Almighty Allah is by means of attention (to Allah), this very attention itself is termed "dhikr (remembrance of Allah) of the heart" and when this attention and remembrance become the source of performance of an actoin and a conduct, it is rated as the **niyyah** (intention) and motive for the action, and since the perfection of man's soul and spirit is attained by means of free actions and each kind of conducts can have a role in the promotion or regression of the soul in one of its dimensions, therefore we conclude that man's all-sided perfection is attained when all distinguished conducts are fulfilled with divine motive and the main stimulant and the giver of direction to conduct is attention to Allah (SWT). In other words, just as physical forces determine the direction of the movement of the objects, so also psychic motives which stem from attention to and remembrance of Allah are spiritual forces which determine the spiritual direction of man's actions and conducts and which give value to them and as already explained, such conducts have two general terms in the Islamic culture: one is taqwā in its general sense and the other **'ibādah** in its general sense.

The conclusion is that each free action to the extent it enjoys divine intention and motive will have positive value; and to the extent it stems from ungodly, egoistic and polytheistic intention will have negative value. Thus, the role of **At-Tawḥīd** in the value system of Islam becomes clear.

Qurānic Expressions About the Philosophy of Morality

So far, we have explained the theory of Islam in the philosophy of morality and values with the most simple rational expressions which were possible for

us. Now we cite some examples of Qur'ānic expressions concerning the principles of this theory:

In Sūratush-Shams (Sūrah 91 of the Holy Qur'ān) in the wake of a number of **āyāt** in which the Almighty Allah swears by the sun, by the moon, by the night, by the day and the like, He says:

> "و نفس و ماسواها ٥ فالهمها فجورها و تقواها ٥ قد افلح من زكاها ٥ و قد خاب من دساها ٥
>
> *"And the soul and Him Who made it perfect, then He inspired it to understand what is right and wrong for it; He will indeed be successful who purifies it, And he will indeed fail who corrupts it (91:7-10).*

Of the many points inferred from these **āyāt**, we content ourselves with citing three points:

The First Point: is that Allah swears by human soul, the soul which Allah has made and delivered well and among all creatures man has a particular privilege to determine his destiny with his own free will: to choose either the way of felicity and salvation or the way of adversity and corruption and certainly Allah's goal of the creation of man is that he attains felicity and salvation, but since human felicity is a matter to be attained by the way of man's own will-power and free choice, so there should necessarily exist another point in the face of it too towards which would retrogress of his own ill-choice any body who chooses to.

The Second Point: is that selection of either of the two points

-exaltation and perfection or fall and retrogression demands recognition. Because it is obvious that without awareness and recognition proper selection and choice does not take place. Hence, the Almighty Allah has made two general ways known to man: one the way of **taqwā** and the other the way of **fujūr**, and from this very interpretation it is inferred that the criterion for the positive conduct values is "**taqwā**" and the criterion for the negative moral values is **fujūr**, as was already explained in the foregoing expressions.

The Third Point: is that to traverse the way of **taqwā** is the very "purification of the soul" and its result is the growth and perfection of the soul, just as to traverse the way of **fujūr** is the very pollution of the soul the result of which is the fall and destruction of the soul itself. So man, by selecting the way of **taqwā**, gives growth and perfection to his soul and by selecting the way of **fujūr** and licence pollutes and destroys his own soul. Therefore, the result of man's free conducts, be they in the direction of growth and perfection or in the direction of fall and retrogression, will accrue to man himself, and from here it can well be inferred that the value conducts have true effect on the perfection and imperfection of the soul and that the positive or negative value criterion is this very perfection and imperfection of man's soul and this is that very first principle in the expression of the logical reason we referred to previously.

From another set of the **āyāt** of the Holy Qur'ān it is inferred that man's eternal felicity and adversity is the result of his own faith and infidelity and praiseworthy and indecent actions:

"وان ليس للانسان الاّ ما سعىٰ ٥ "

"And that man shall have nothing but what he strives for (53:39)."

"لها ما کسبت و علیها ما اکتسبت ..."

"... *For it, is what it has earned, and against it what it has incurred ... (2:286).*"

"... و وقیت کل نفس ما کسبت ..."

" ... *And every soul is paid off whatever it has earned ... (3:25)*

"یوم تجد کل نفس ما عملت من خیر محضرا ..."

" *The day when every soul shall find present what it has done of good ... (3:30).*"

and there are tens of other **āyāt** in the Holy Qur'ān indicating that the blessings and torments in the Hereafter are the result of the actions which man has himself fulfilled in this world, rather they are that very actions of his which in the Hereafter world appear in the form of blessing or torment.

Of course the language of most of the **āyat** of the Holy Qur'ān is that the blessings or torments in the Hereafter are the reward or punishment for the conducts in this world. With our mind having got acquainted with the concepts of reward and punishment, it might at first be imagined that the relation of good and bad actions with their Hereafterly results is a nominal and conventional relation, but taking into view the cited **āyāt** of the Holy Qur'ān it becomes clear that beyond these nominal concepts a series of creational facts and true and real relations are hidden, though our knowledge is not sufficient for the discovery of these true relations, because we have no experience of such relations.

Included among the **āyāt** to be considered in this discussion are the **āyāt** which have mentioned about spiritual light and darkness, which terms have been largely applied with regard to truth and falsehood, moral and value,

good and evil and with regard to the affairs related to them in the Holy Qur'ān and also in the sayings of the Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam and the Infallible Imams (AS) and which have a particular position in Islamic culture.

On one hand, the Holy Qur'ān introduces the Almighty Allah as "**nūr** (the light) of the heavens and the earth" and it is obvious that by this light the generally known physical light is not meant and on the other hand, the Holy prophet (SA) of Islam has been introduced (by the Holy Qurān) as

"... سراجاً منيراً ٥ "

"... *a light-giving torch (33:46).*"

and on the other hand the Holy Qur'ān has itself been named "**nūr**" (light)

"... قد جاءكم من اللّه نور و كتاب مبين ٥ "

"... *There has come to you a light and a clear Book from Allah (5:15).*"

and also the aim of the revelation of the Holy Qur'ān to the Holy Prophet (SA) of Islam has been considered (by the Holy Qur'ān) to be taking the people out of darknesses and bringing them into the "light":

"... لتخرج الناس من الظلمات الى النور ..."

"... *That you may bring forth men, by their Lord's permission from utter darkness into light ... (14:1).*"

Also, the believers have been introduced (by the Holy Qur'ān) as those who in this world are possessed of light (**nūr**), **versus** the infidel and those

who are disobedient to Allah's commands who have sunk into darknesses:

"اومن كان ميتاً فاحييناه و جعلنا له نوراً يمشى به فى الناس كمن مثله فى الظلمات ليس بخارج منها ..."

"Is he who was dead then We raised him to life and made for him a light by which he walks among the people, like him whose likeness is that of one in utter darkness whence he cannot come forth? ... (6:123)."

Finally, among the descriptions of the Resurrection Day, the Holy Qur'ān says:

"يوم ترى المؤمنين والمؤمنات يسعى نورهم بين ايديهم و بأيمانهم ..."

"On that day you will see the faithful men and the faithful women -their light running before them and on their right hand- ... (57:12)."

"يوم يقول المنافقون و المنافقات للذين امنوا انظرونا نقتبس من نوركم قيل ارجعوا وراءكم فالتمسوا نوراً ..."

"On the day when the hypocritical men and the hypocritical women will say to those who believe: Wait for us, that we may have light from your light; it shall be said: Turn back and seek a light (hinting that for seeking light you should return to the world which is impossible) ... (57:13)."

And the most comprehensive āyāt in this connection are the āyāt 35 to 40 of Sūratun-Nūr (Chapter 24) of the Holy Qur'ān which start with this

sentence:

"اللّه نور السمٰوات والارض ..."

"Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth ... (24:35)."

and end with this sentence:

"... و من لم يجعل اللّه له نوراً فماله من نور ٥ "

"... And to whomsoever Allah does not give light, he has no light (24:40)."

Here, we do not have the time to completely interpret and explain these **āyāt**, but for the clarification of their relationship with the present discussion, we have to give a brief explanation:

In these **āyāt**, after the Almighty Allah has been introduced as the light of the heavens and of the earth (the light of the worlds), a parable has been given for His light in **āyah** 35 of **sūrah** 24.

"... A likeness of His light is as a niche in which is a lamp, the lamp is in a glass, (and) the glass is as it were a brightly shining star, lit from a blessed olive-tree, neither eastern nor western ... (24:35)."

(Hinting that the sun shines from all its sides perfectly and no unripe fruit remains in it). Such oil is so susceptible for being inflamed that it is as if it automatically lits without any fire reaching it.

About this parable many sayings have been expressed by the exegetists

which we are unable to survey here. One of such commentaries is that the proof of this torch which is ready to be kindled is the heart of a **mu'min** person which has perfect aptitude for relationship with the Almighty Allah and enjoying the divine light. The other **āyāt** confirm this view:

"في بيوت اذن الله ان ترفع و يذكر فيها اسمه يسبح له فيها بالغدو والاصال ٥ رجالٌ لاتلهيهم تجارة و لابيع عن ذكر الله ..."

"In houses which Allah has permitted to be exalted and that His name may be remembered in them; there glorify Him therein in the mornings and the evenings, men whom neither merchandise nor selling diverts from the remembrance of Allah ... (24:36-37)."

In fact, it is the remembrance of Allah which makes their (godly men's) lives lit and illuminous and and which gives value to all their conducts and deeds.

On the opposite side of these, there are the disbelievers, who due to forgetting Allah have sunk into darkness and whose actions have become null and valueless. And in the two last-mentioned verses, two parables have been cited for the actions of the disbelievers: The first parable is

"... The mirage in a desert, which the thirsty man deems to be water; until when he comes to it he finds it to be naught, and there he finds Allah, so He pays back to him his reckoning in full ... (24:39)."

That is, the disbelievers engage in efforts and endeavours in hope of

felicity and attach their hearts to their own deeds, but when they should derive benefit from these efforts (in the Hereafter), they see no useful thing and the Almighty Allah will make it clear to them that they have done no useful work for their felicity.

The second parable for the disbeliever and the value of their deeds is:

> *"Utter darkness in the deep sea: there covers it a wave above which is another wave, above which is a cloud, (layers of) utter darkness one above another; when he holds out his hand, he is almost unable to see it ... (24:40)."*

The above **āyah** ends with the following sentence:

> "... و من لم يجعل اللّه له نوراً فماله من نور ٥ "
>
> *"... And to whomsoever Allah does not give light, he has no light (24:40)."*

Whatever ambiguity, if any, might exist about the reality (the true meaning) of "**miṣbāh**" (lamp), "**zujājah**" (glass) and mishkāt (niche) (The expressions applied in **sūrah** 24 of the Holy Qur'ān, in **āyah** 35 referred to) and whatever discussion, if any, might be made regarding the sea, the waves and the clouds surrounding it, there is no room for any doubt and ambiguity about this matter that these **āyāt** regard the men of Allah (the believers) to be those who are blessed with light and felicity, who through remembrance of Allah and heart-felt attention to the Creator make their lives valuable and that the disbelievers, through forgetting Allah, destroy the value of their deeds and will finally be afflicted with darkness and adversity. So, the criterion for

good, felicity, light and true value is relation with the original source of light which is attained by means of faith in Allah and the attention of one's heart to Him and the criterion for evil, adversity, darkness, valuelessness and futility is lack of relationship and connection with the original source of light which develop as a result of disbelief (in Allah), forgetting Allah and turning away from His remembrance, like an electric light which on connection with the electricity-generating system is lit and on disconnection is extinguished. And these are the purports of those very principles to which in the last expression of logical reason we referred and thus the conformity of the expression of logical reason with the Qur'ānic expressions becomes manifest.

Here, we end our discussion and beseech the Almighty Allah to deliver all of us from the various kinds of darknesses, to strengthen our relation and connection with the origin of Light, to protect all of us against any sort of deviation and unsound judgment and to finally associate us with His worthy servants and the pure lights of Ahlul-Bayt (AS) The Infallible and the Purified.

May greetings and Allah's blessings and mercy be upon you all.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. Ash-Shaykh Aṣ-Ṣadūq, "**At-Tawḥīd**", p. 21, **Riwāyah** No 13.
2. "**'Uyūn Akhbārir-Riḍā**", vol 1, p. 135; Ash-Shaykh Aṣ-Ṣadūq, "**At-Tawḥīd**", p. 24, **Riwāyah** No. 21.
3. Ash-Shaykh Aṣ-Ṣadūq, "**At-Tawḥīd**", p. 83.
4. "**Uṣūlul-Kāfī**", vol. 2, p. 315, Ḥadīth 2 and the translated text of Uṣūlul-Kāfī, vol. 4, p. 3.
5. "**Mafātīḥul-Jinān**", the end of Du'ā'u 'Arafah.
6. "**Nahjul-Balāghah**" of Fayḍ, p. 779.
7. Ibnul-'Athīr, "**Al-Kāmilu Fittārīkh**", vol. 2, p. 462.
8. Sometimes mental imaginations have certain effects, for example, if one imagines sour things, his mouth waters and/or on imagining pleasing or displeasing things, one feels pleasure or displeasure and on the whole, the renewal of memories have effects.
9. "**Al-'Uṣūlul-Kāfī**", vol. 1, p. 146, Ḥadīth 1 and the translated text of "**Al-'Uṣūlul-Kāfī**", vol.1, p. 200.
10. "**Al-'Usūlul-Kāfī**", vol. 2, p. 352, Ḥadīth 7 and Ḥadīth 8 and the translated text of "**Al-'Uṣūlul-Kāfī**", vol. 4, p. 53 and 54.
11. Intellect does not have the ability to perceive all the details of the matters. For example, all wise men know that justice is good and oppression is bad. But they cannot distinguish the details of the cases of justice and oppression, that exactly where is oppression and where is justice? The matter might reach to such a point where the truth and falsehood -justice and oprression- are mistaken for each other and the truth is regarded as falsehood and justice as oppression.

12. **"Biḥārul-Anwār"**, vol. 12, p. 39, Ḥadīth 24.
13. In one of the towns of our Islamic country which is a relatively small town too, two hundred missiles were hit, rendering the town into the form of a ruin. However, the people of this town say: "We wish the missiles and bombs too which hit the other towns and cities of our country would hit our town, so that the people of the other towns and cities would remain safe and sound." Where in history has such self-sacrifice been witnessed?-
14. Related to **takwīn** (creation) such as destitutions, disasters and problems and related to **tashrī'** (the divine legislation) such as **ṣawm.**
15. **"Jāmi'us-Ṣu'ūdāt"** , vol. 2, p. 59.
16. **"Sharḥu Nahjul-Balāghah"** , Ibn Abil-Ḥadīd.
17. **Al-'Uṣūlul-Kāfī** , vol. 2, p. 75.
18. It has even been narrated that in the past some unaware persons had blinded or had closed their eyes so that they could take no **ḥarām** (forbidden by Islam) look.
19. **"Al-'Uṣūlul-Kāfī"** , vol. 2, p. 352.

GLOSSARY OF ISLAMIC TERMS

Al-A'immatul-Ma'ṣūmūn	The twelve Infallible Imams (AS)
Al-'Arsh	Throne of Allah, The Empyrean
'adl	justice
'ālim (pl:'ulamā')	Islamic Scholar
Allah	The One God
Amirul-Mu'minīn	The Commander of the Faithful, Al-Imam 'Alī (AS)
Ashā'irah	Ash'arite school of thought
aṣl (pl:'uṣūl)	principle
āyah (pl: āyāt)	verse of the Holy Qur'ān
Al-Bi'thatun-Nabawiyyah	the appointment by Allah as prophet
dhikr	remembrance of Allah (SWT)
du'ā'	invocation to Allah (SWT)

fājir	wicked, corrupt
faqīh (pl: fuqahā')	Islamic jurisprudent
far' (pl:furū')	branch
fāsiq (pl: fāsiqūn)	transgressor, evil-doer
Fir'awn	pharaoh
fisq	evil-doing
fujūr	wickedness, debauchery
Furū'ud-Dīn	the duties to be performed according to Islamic **Sharī'ah**
ḥadīth (pl: aḥādīth)	tradition of the prophet Muḥammad (SA)
ḥadīthun-Qudsiyy	a ḥadīth which relates a revelation from Allah (SWT) in the language of the prophet (SA)
ḥajj	Specified pilgrimage to Makkah according to Islamic **Sharī'ah**
ḥalāl	Islamically lawful
ḥamd	praising Allah's qualities

ḥarām	unlawful by Islam, forbidden by Islam
ḥujjah	proof, reason
al-ḥūrul-'īn	the pure and beautiful mates in paradise
'ibādah (pl: **'ibādāt**)	worship or servitude to Allah (SWT)
Iblīs	Ṣatan
ikhlāṣ	sincerity of intention
Imam	leader
Imāmah	leadership, succession of Prophet Muḥammad (SA) by The Twelve Infallible Imams (AS)
īmān	faith in Islam
imlā'	giving respite
istidrāj	drawing one towards a situation (failure)
Jibrā'īl	The Archangel Gabriel
jihād	holy war, fighting or endeavouring in the way of Allah (SWT)

Kāfir (pl: kuffār)	disbeliever, infidel
Al-kalimatuṭ-Ṭayyibah	The Holy Kalimah, ie, **"lā ilāha illāllāh Muḥammadur-Rasūlullāh"** meaning "there is no god but Allah (SWT) and Muḥammad (SA) is the Prophet of Allah."
Khalīfah (pl: khulafā')	caliph, successor of Prophet Muḥammad (SA)
khayr	good
Khilāfah	caliphate, succession to Prophet Muḥammad (SA)
kufr	disbelief, infidelity
Lā ilāha illallāh	there is no god but Allah (SWT)
Ma'ād	The Resurrection
Ma'būd	The Worshipped One
malakah (pl: malakāt)	fixed spiritual quality
ma'ṣūm (pl: ma'ṣumūn)	the infallible
mawlā	master

muhkam āyāt	clear āyāt
mu'min (pl: mi'minūn)	believer, faithful
munāfiq (pl: munāfiqūn)	hypocrite
Mūsā (AS)	Prophet Moses (AS)
mushrik	polytheist
mustaḥabb	recommended but not obligatory
mustajābud-da'wah	one whose prayer is heard by Allah
mutashābih āyāt	metaphorical āyāt
muttaqī (pl: muttaqūn)	pious, virtuous, one who is careful of his duties towards Allah
Namrūd	Nimrod
naṣṣ	divine decree, explicit stipulation
nifāq	hypocrisy
niyyah (pl: niyyāt)	intention

nubuwwah	prophethood
nūr (pl: anwār)	light
qaḍā'	destiny
qadar	decree
Qārūn	Korah, Croesus
Qiyāmah	The Resurrection Day
qurb	nearness
Rabb (pl: arbāb)	The lord
riwāyah (pl: riwāyāt)	a narration by the Twelve Infallible Imāms (AS) and Fāṭimah (AS)
rizq	sustenance
Rubūbiyyah	Lordship
Ṣaḥābiyy (pl: Ṣaḥābah)	companion of Prophet Muḥammad (SA)
Sajdah	prostration
Ṣalāt (pl: Ṣalawāt)	Islamic prayer

Ṣalātul-Jumu'ah	Friday Prayer
Ṣawm (pl:Ṣiyām)	Statutory Islamic Obligation of Performing **Ṣawm** or fasting
Shahādatayn	The two witnesses by a Muslim that Allah (SWT) is One and Prophet Muḥammad (SA) is His Messenger
Sharī'ah	Islamic laws
sharr	evil
Shayṭān	Satan
shirk	Polytheism, attributing partners to Allah (SWT)
silsilatudh-dhahab	golden chain of Infallible narrators
Sunnah	tradition, **ḥadīth**
Sūrah (pl: suwar)	Chapter of the Holy Qur'ān
ṭāghūt	Satan
ṭāhir	Islamically pure
takwīn	creation

takwīnī	creational, related to creation
taqwā	piety, virtuousness, being careful of one's duties to Allah (SWT)
tashrī'	divine legislation
tashrī'ī	related to divine laws and religion
At-Tawḥīd	monotheism, belief in One God
Tawḥīdī	related to At-Tawḥīd, based on AT-Tawḥīd
'ubūdiyyah	servitude
'ulamā'	Islamic or religious scholars
Ummah	Islamic people
uṣūl	principles
Uṣūlud-Dīn	the fundamental principles of Islam
waḥy	divine revelation
wājib	obligatory

Walī (pl: **awliyā'**)	Allah's friend, Islamic jurisprudential guardian, ruler
wilāyah	friendship, Islamic jurisprudential guardianship
al-wilāyatul-'āmmah	general guardianship
wilāyatul-faqīh	the guardianship of the Islamic jurisprudent
al-wilāyatul-khāṣṣah	particular guardianship